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REAL ESTATE IN-DEPTH

Official Publication of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors



Realtors Overcame COVID Pandemic Restrictions To Post Significant Home Sales Increases in 2020

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—Realtors in the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors’ market area that includes the lower Hudson Valley region, adapted to state-imposed restrictions early in the pandemic and rode the wave of pent-up buyer demand to post sales increases as compared to 2019 activity.

Sales in Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan and Putnam counties soared in the fourth quarter with all markets posting double-digit increases in closed transactions, according to a report released earlier this month by OneKey MLS. Overall home sales in Putnam County in the fourth quarter skyrocketed 61.8%, while Rockland sales soared 51.3%, followed by Sullivan County with a 45.6% rise. Westchester County saw a 41% increase in overall home sales in the fourth quarter, followed closely by Orange County at 40%. Bronx County in the fourth quarter posted a 3% decline in overall home sales.

The single-family home market fueled much of the surge, as Westchester posted

a 57.7% increase in sales in the fourth quarter 2020 as compared to a year earlier. Putnam’s single-family market shot up 64%, Sullivan County saw a 45.7% rise in sales, Rockland County posted a 57.3% spike, while Orange County’s single-family home sales activity was 49% higher than 12 months earlier and the Bronx posted a 12.3% increase in single-family sales the last three months of 2020.

The combination of strong sales and limited inventory caused the median price of single-family homes to rise throughout the region for the year: Westchester up 12.2% to \$735,000; Putnam County up 6.0% to \$380,000; Rockland County up 9.9% to \$500,000; Orange County up 16.0% to \$315,000 and Sullivan County ups 36.8% to \$195,000. Despite lower sales, the single-family home price in the Bronx for 2020 rose 6.0% to \$530,000.

Editor’s Note: To review the full OneKey MLS report and statistics for Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange, Sullivan and Bronx counties, please see pages 19 and 20.

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HGAR Market Area Home Sales Fourth Quarter 2020	
Putnam County	+61.8%
Rockland County	+51.3%
Sullivan County	+45.6%
Westchester County	+41.0%
Orange County	+40.0%
Bronx County	-3.0%

HGAR to Install Hawkins Syska, Directors at Virtual Gala on Feb. 4

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—In the COVID-19 era, Realtors have been forced to adapt to new health and safety protocols. In the spirit of adjusting to today’s unpleasant reality, the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors will hold its first virtual installation of its officers and directors on Feb. 4.

Past events have been staged at first-class venues throughout the region and have featured high profile industry leaders and politicians and this year’s gala will be no different, except of course when it comes to the venue. HGAR will hold its Installation Gala via Zoom and will install 2021 HGAR President Crystal Hawkins Syska and association directors and officers on Feb. 4 from 5 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.

Hawkins Syska and HGAR Officers will be installed by National Association



2016 HGAR President
Crystal Hawkins Syska

tion of Realtors President Charlie Opler. NYSAR President David Legaz will install the 2021 HGAR Directors. The

Installation Gala program will also include a 30-minute mixer with breakout sessions prior to the program and entertainment by international music duo, “The Reminders.”

A Swag Bag with champagne and gourmet snack will also be available for those who purchase tickets prior to Jan. 21. For more information go to: <https://www.hgar.com/event/hgar-installation-of-2021-20210204>.

Hawkins Syska, an Associate Broker with Keller Williams NY Realty in White Plains, has an ambitious agenda for the association in 2021 despite the pandemic, which she detailed in the “Five Questions With” feature that appears on page 2 of this edition of Real Estate In-Depth.

In a candid interview, the Bronx

native discussed Realtor responsibility in dealing with COVID-19, the importance of HGAR’s recent merger with the Bronx-Manhattan North Association of Realtors and her administration’s legislative and Fair Housing goals in 2021.

“My specific theme for this year, my platform is ‘Fulfilling the American Promise’ and that is a direct response to what we have seen as challenges in everyone receiving fair and equal treatment when it comes to housing,” Hawkins Syska said. “This year we will be creating a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and it’s my intention that committee will be working with Fair Housing and Education (committees) to bring fresh new insight and training to our members to make sure we can serve the public at the highest level.”

See story on page 2.

Commercial Brokers Optimistic About Markets, Opportunities in 2021

By John Jordan

WHITE PLAINS—A panel consisting of brokers and affiliated professionals in the commercial real estate market were optimistic that the industry in Westchester and surrounding markets will rebound once the coronavirus pandemic has run its course.

The panelists agreed that the multifamily housing sector will continue to be strong in Westchester once vaccines have been administered and COVID infection rates have dramatically declined, while other sectors such as retail and the office sector will have to adapt to changing times. All agreed that the post pandemic environment in the New York City suburbs will create many opportunities for investors.

The Business Council of Westchester and Fordham Real Estate Institute program held virtually on Jan. 5 was entitled “The State of Real Estate: The Path

Forward in a Post Pandemic World.” The event was moderated by Chris O’Callaghan, managing director of RM Friedland, and featured panelists: Paul Adler, chief strategy officer for Rand Commercial; Eon Nichols, a partner at the law firm Cuddy & Feder LLP; An-

“We are seeing folks realistically plan for the fourth quarter given the slow roll out of the vaccine at this point. Hopefully after Jan. 20 (when the Biden administration takes office) we will see a different direction.”

—Paul Adler, Rand Commercial

drew Weisz, executive vice president of the RPW Group; Craig Ruoff, executive managing director of Westchester Brokerages at Colliers International; Abe Schlissfeld, managing partner, Marks Paneth LLP and Bridget Gibbons, director of economic development for Westchester County.

Colliers’ Ruoff said that of late he has

been working on a number of long-term (seven-to-10-year terms) lease renewals and restructurings that are scheduled to close in the first and second quarter of 2021.

“What I am hearing from clients, prospective clients and other experts in the



industry is that God-willing if everything goes well with the vaccines, business will start to pick up by the summertime,” Ruoff

said. “Unfortunately, on the pessimistic side I am hearing from a lot of people that they think it is going to be more likely the fourth quarter of 2021.”

The start of the recovery, he added will be hinged on how fast the vaccines are distributed and administered and the impact on the economy from the vaccines.

Adler said that his firm is seeing “pent-up optimism, but extreme caution.” With most companies having low reserves, they will likely be cautious going forward until the pandemic crisis subsides, he related.

“They have hung in through this year,” he said. Adler later noted, “We are seeing folks realistically plan for the fourth quarter given the slow roll out of the vaccine at this point. Hopefully after

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5 QUESTIONS WITH HGAR President Crystal Hawkins Syska

By John Jordan

To begin 2021, *Real Estate In-Depth* chose to interview HGAR President Crystal Hawkins Syska who begins her term under unprecedented circumstances with the nation in the grip of a deadly pandemic, a national economic crisis and social and political unrest that will likely shape policy and economic activity for years to come.

In recognition of the continued spread of COVID-19, Hawkins Syska will be the first association president to be installed virtually. On Feb. 4 from 5 p.m. to 6:45 p.m., HGAR will install its 2021 President, Executive Officers and Directors via Zoom.

Hawkins Syska and HGAR Officers will be installed by National Association of Realtors President Charlie Opler. NYSAR President David Legaz will install the 2021 HGAR Directors. The Installation Gala program will also include a 30-minute mixer with breakout sessions prior to the program and entertainment by international music duo, "The Reminders." A Swag Bag with champagne and gourmet snack will also be available for those who purchase tickets prior to Jan. 21. For more information go to: <https://www.hgar.com/event/hgar-installation-of-2021-20210204>.

Hawkins Syska, an Associate Broker with Keller Williams NY Realty in White Plains, has been in the real estate business since earning her license in 2004.

The Bronx native first joined the HGAR Board of Directors in 2017 and served as Secretary before being named President-elect in 2020. She also serves as a Director with the New York State Association of Realtors. The graduate of City College of New York began her real estate career with a small brokerage firm in Ossining before joining Keller Williams NY Realty. Hawkins Syska specializes in short sales and has a Certified Distressed Properties Expert (CDPE) certification and has a service area from the Bronx to Dutchess County.

Before entering real estate, Hawkins Syska worked as a property manager in Greenwich, CT for about two years. Her first post-college position was in public relations and communications with the International Rescue Committee in Manhattan, which helps refugees from foreign countries, settle into the U.S.

1 Real Estate In-Depth: As we enter 2021, the Hudson Valley region is experiencing a surge in coronavirus cases and deaths. While the real estate industry remains fully operational, with safety protocols, what would you say to Realtors working in these most difficult times?

Hawkins Syska: I would say they need to work smart and to be cautious and considerate. We should not take any unnecessary risks as we try to help individuals continue in their goal to homeownership. In my mind what that means is I think that with the protocols that we have in place we should make sure that we are only taking the most qualified buyers into properties—meaning asking for the COVID disclosures, which are required, but also asking

for pre-approvals for funds, which is very important. This is not the time for "tire kickers." Ultimately it elevates our service anyhow, because we are really dealing with the people who want to buy now.

I also think that we should take precautions in terms of protecting our homeowners and work with them and their concerns—making sure that there is hand sanitizer, booties and masks are available in order to go the extra mile in protecting the public.

Also, we should protect ourselves.



It is not required that they have to work (in-person), but when they do

so they make sure that they are not taking any unnecessary exposure to themselves. I personally had COVID-19. It was brought into our home through one of our kids and the truth is that what we experience with the illness is not necessarily what plays out in real life with what we hear on the news. Our teenager had the symptoms far



worse than either myself or Peter (Spino, her fiancée) did. And that was not what we thought (when first contracting the virus).

2 Real Estate In-Depth: A native of the Fordham section of the Bronx, you are taking on the role of HGAR President shortly after the association merged with the Bronx-Manhattan North Association of Realtors. Do you believe the formal addition of the Bronx to HGAR's market area is important and if so, why?

Hawkins Syska: I do feel the merger is important and I am really excited that they joined exactly at the time that I will be president. There is a synergistic relationship between the Bronx and Westchester County. You can go to nearly any part of Westchester County and you

will find former Bronxites. They are even in areas where a lot of us settle. When I look at this there is definitely those who leave the city to come up (to the northern suburbs) and there are those who are actually leaving Westchester to go back to the Bronx to have that type of lifestyle. So, I think that it is incredible that we are all one, together.

3 Real Estate In-Depth: Fair Housing has been in the news, especially with NAR recently offering an apology for past practices in terms of its past actions on fair housing. HGAR has embarked on a number of fair housing initiatives. Can you provide an update and if you have any further plans to institute new fair housing programs at HGAR?

Hawkins Syska: My specific theme for this year, my platform is "Fulfilling



4 Real Estate In-Depth: Can you outline your administration's other plans and goals for 2021 at HGAR?

Hawkins Syska: I want to increase our visibility to the public through some public service announcements on local cable channels... I am looking to work with our local governments to create access to Department of Buildings' information for the whole county, to be more similar to New York City.

The other goal is to increase the diversity among our agents and work more homogeneously with other communities. One way (to increase diversity among agents) is more conversations need to happen on the high school level about what it means to be a real estate agent because of the fact that my step daughter just graduated high school and is now in college and there are quite a few of her friends that are actually looking to join the real estate industry. So, I think if we could actually create programs geared more to the young about the impact of real estate on wealth in all the neighborhoods, I think that we would raise awareness and attract different groups of people to the industry.

5 Real Estate In-Depth: HGAR has been heavily involved in legislative advocacy throughout the Hudson Valley and now is engaged in representing members in the New York City region in both Albany and Washington, DC. Are there any critical legislative issues you would like to see either advanced or defeated during your term of office?

Hawkins Syska: I would definitely want to see on the local and state level more of a recognition of affordable housing because affordable housing is not just for those starting out, but also for our seniors, which are about to be a really big group, bigger than any other and there is not enough housing for them to stay in Westchester. So, I think we need to revisit rent control laws because there are a lot of aspects of them that are unintended consequences that are actually harming the public as opposed to helping them. Also, we need to address co-op transparency.

Based on a lot of things that have happened this year and when it comes to co-op sales that are down 16.7%, people just slip past them (co-ops) and are willing to move to places like Sullivan County and part of that is the process. So, I think co-op disclosure is very important.

I also think that the initiatives President Barack Obama put in place for HUD need to come back on the federal level, such as the language changes on (the Fair Housing Act's) Disparate Impact Standard.

Another key issue is the SALT Cap. We lost a lot of sales to Connecticut because of that cap and we need to have that changed. I am really excited that it looks positive in that direction (that the new Biden administration may change or repeal the SALT Cap imposed as part of the federal Tax Cuts and Job Act passed in 2017.)

the American Promise" and that is a direct response to what we have seen as challenges in everyone receiving fair and equal treatment when it comes to housing. This year we will be creating a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and it's my intention that committee will be working with Fair Housing and Education (committees) to bring fresh new insight and training to our members to make sure we can serve the public at the highest level.

Editor's Note: Hawkins Syska said that committee chairs and members have yet to be named.

Realtors Overcame Pandemic Restrictions, Post Sales Increases in 2020

Continued from page 1

Crystal Hawkins Syska, 2021 president of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, said that while overall and single-family home sales activity were strong in 2021, the cooperative sector in Westchester County in 2020 suffered a 16.7% decline in sales activity, while the Bronx's co-op market saw a 17.2% decrease in sales for the year.

"I actually perceive we are going to have a further slide in co-ops because of the fact that there is still this movement out of New York City," Skysa, who is an Associate Broker with Keller Williams NY Realty in White Plains, said. "People who are seeking homes in the lower-priced points are skipping right past to some of the other counties."

She said that many are working remotely at their homes and therefore are saying to themselves: "If I can spend \$300,000 why even deal with a co-op when I can go further (north) and buy a house." She blames not only COVID and its impact on the workforce, but also on a cumbersome co-op approval process, which Hawkins Syska said needs to be reformed.

The migration north has also impacted the luxury market in Westchester, particu-

larly the Northern Westchester market and surrounding suburban locations, according to Elizabeth Nunan, president and CEO, Houlihan Lawrence.

"In Lower Westchester, sales remain strong as buyers anticipate returning to commuting to New York City and the ease offered by these communities," said Nunan. "However, it is noted that many buyers anticipate continuing the 'work from home' model and have ventured further north. Northern Westchester stands out as home sales soared 40% and inventory declined 40%."

Joseph Rand, chief creative officer for Howard Hanna | Rand Realty, stated in the brokerage firm's review of the New York markets that the pandemic's divergent economic impact is skewing sales to the high end, because entry-level buyers at lower price points are more affected by the economic slowdown than higher-income buyers. "Going forward, we believe that demand will be strong throughout 2021. We know that the pipeline of new contracts going into 2021 is much higher than a year ago, that inventory is low, that interest rates keep falling through historic lows, and that economic conditions should improve with the continued distribution of the COVID vaccine," he predicted.

Commercial Brokers Optimistic About Markets, Opportunities in 2021

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Jan. 20 (when the Biden administration takes office) we will see a different direction..."

On the development front in the Hudson Valley, Adler said he is hearing, "Build here, build now." Companies are interested in the shift to telework and its impact on the market.

He cautioned this trend does not spell the end of the office market, but said the office market "will look different" in the future.

"We have to understand that," Adler said. "Landlords and tenants will be sparing over shared costs and how much and when and what leases will look like."

He noted that Orange County and locations further north are seeing increased interest in last-mile warehouse and distribution facilities. In Westchester, the commercial market is seeing a shift from biotechnology to life science development.

"The region's diversity is our best resource," he added. "We have a lot of optimism and we are proceeding with

caution."

Cuddy & Feder's Nichols, who represents developers before municipal approval agencies and the Westchester County Industrial Development Agency, was also bullish on future investment in the multifamily sector and other growth industries.

"What we are hearing from our clients is there is a lot of opportunity out there, especially if you spent the last several months sitting on the sidelines being cautious, holding onto your cash looking at deals," he said. "Once the pandemic is over, hopefully soon, or at least curtailed, I think you are going to see a lot of investment, especially in the housing and retail area."

Nichols expects retail space both here and across the nation to be repurposed to other uses. Both Nichols and panelists said that investors will keep a sharp eye on the current exodus of New York City residents to the suburbs and whether that trend is short or long-term.

Weisz said he was "incredibly opti-

mistic" about the markets going forward, noting that his firm since the pandemic began has signed 10 leases with New York City companies that are moving part or all of their operations to their properties located in Westchester and Fairfield County, CT. His firm is also looking to develop large residential projects adjacent to its office properties in Harrison and White Plains.

The suburban housing and office markets have not been hit as hard as New York City from the pandemic and therefore should see more leasing and investment sales activity from New York City companies and investors looking to penetrate the Westchester and Fairfield County markets, Weisz said.

"In 2021, once the vaccine is more widely distributed, things are really going to pick up," Weisz predicted. He also believes that in time, the suburban markets will benefit from companies looking to offer their workers options on where they want to work.

"It will take a little time but I think in the

next 24 to 36 months that 'hub and spoke model' will play out," Weisz predicted.

Callahan agreed with Weisz' prediction, saying, "I think flexibility and adaptability in providing work space for people that no longer necessarily have to take a train into New York City is going to certainly play out."

Weisz also noted that RPW Group has recently acquired 1055 Washington Blvd. in Stamford, CT. *The Westchester County Business Journal* reported the Rye-Brook based company purchased the 10-story, 182,000-square-foot office building for \$24 million.

Weisz also reported that his firm has signed a lease deal with an unnamed law firm for 25,000 square feet at his firm's 100 Manhattanville Road property in Purchase.

Westchester County's Gibbons detailed some of the growth markets the county is seeing at the moment, including bioscience, advanced manufacturing, financial services and technology.



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Crystal Hawkins Syska
HGAR President



Will You Do the Work?

I open my computer to begin my very first article for *Real Estate In-Depth*, and in true avoidant behavior, I open up a new window and begin scanning the Internet. First is Facebook (of course) where being a peeping Tom is totally allowable and desired. Liking your friends' pictures and making a comment on a few. Gif's and emojis preferred. A Shutterfly ad comes up, oh goodie! (Squirrel) click the button, and now I'm logged in looking at what new photobook I want to create. There are ONLY 17 hours left to get 50% off of basically everything! So, says the banner at the top of the page. I go to the cards and stationary section and the first thing that catches my eye is a New Year's card that reads, "Well, that was crazy! Happy 2021." Instantly the edges of my mouth curl up into a smile. "This is hilarious," I think as I look at the card.

Slowly the happiness on my face fades as the reality of the wake of COVID-19 hits my heart. In the United States 400,000 lives have been lost. Families forever changed. Mine included. I don't feel so excited anymore. Who at this very moment is sitting at a table with an empty chair where someone they loved will no longer be in 2021? I pause to give myself a moment to process the magnitude of this reality. My heart is with all of you who read these words and they hold true for you, or someone you know. It's so easy to get lost in numbers on a screen, graphs and debates, all the while forgetting the human currency of souls no longer enjoyed.

As we begin this new year, how do we hold space for what was lost, yet press on for a stronger tomorrow? Even more so, how do we do this with unity and hope? It is really easy to be enticed into a space that is passionate, but it helps us all when it is guided by positivity. This is not naive, it's helpful, it's American. The words of the Declaration of Independence are called to mind:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Do we unanimously agree that this is true? If we believe that it is, can we affirm that through word and deed? Thus, by doing so we move from the "American Dream" to the "American Promise." The term "American Dream" was coined from the book "Epic of America" by James Truslow Adams. The "American Dream" has come to be defined as: "The belief that anyone, regardless of where they come from or what class they are born into, can attain their own version of success in a society where upward mobility is for everyone. This is achieved through sacrifice, hard work and risk taking rather than by chance."

I agree with the definition. What I don't agree with is that it should be called a dream. It needs to be real. It needs to be the American Promise. That is the embodiment of holding the assertion of the Declaration as "truth." And it is incumbent upon us as leaders to make it so.

I assert that we are all leaders. Former Brigadier General Rebecca S. Halstead made this salient point, "we all must lead ourselves first." Therefore, we should all take the lead in promoting peace. In order to have peace, there must be order. To have order, you must have trust. To have trust, there must be a fundamental ubiquitous belief and understanding of truth. This connection was studied and established by Nathaniel Braden, a psychotherapist who did extensive research on the functionality of self-esteem.

Self-esteem and public confidence are two sides of a coin. There is an embedded connection between how we believe and see ourselves and how a nation, family, culture and organization functions. There are internal and external truths, both of which, for the purposes of this discussion, should be constructed from the fabric that makes the "American Promise" possible.

Braden established that in order to have self-esteem there are six pillars that are necessary for its establishment and maintenance. One such pillar is the Pillar of Self-Acceptance. Self-Acceptance as defined here means: the practice of owning truths regarding one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors; of being kind toward oneself with respect to them; and of being "for" oneself in a basic sense."

Therefore, the concept of community-acceptance can be defined as: Community-Acceptance or Public-Acceptance: the practice of owning truths regarding

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 Crystal Hawkins Syska, President
 Anthony A. Domathoti President-Elect
 Vincent Buccieri Regional Director and Chapter Representative, Bronx County
 Maurice Owen-Michaane, Regional Director, and Chapter Representative New York County
 Clayton Livingston, Regional Director, Putnam County
 Eydie Lopez, Regional Director, Orange County
 Roberta F. Bangs, Regional Director, Rockland County
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 Gail Fattizzi, Immediate HGAR Past President
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 Tony L. D'Anzic, Secretary
 Richard K. Haggerty, Chief Executive Officer
 John Jordan, Editor
 Bart D'Andrea, Art Director
 John Vecchiolla, Photographer
 Meadow Art & Design, Design & Production

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GATEWAY PERSPECTIVES

By Richard Haggerty, HGAR CEO



Enough!

I'm going to make this short and sweet. Enough!

Enough with the political grandstanding. Enough with the conspiracy theories. Enough with the inflammatory rhetoric that is tearing at the framework of our democratic institutions and creating baseless distrust of our electoral system—the backbone of our democracy.

We need to move on to the next chapter. We need to begin the process of healing the wounds of 2020 and we need to begin the process of healing our economy. Don't for one second think that the stock market recovery from the dramatic March plunge in 2020 is a sign of a strong economy, nor is the housing recovery in the lower Hudson Valley, which was primarily fueled by people relocating out of New York City. COVID-19 has decimated large segments of our economy including travel, hospitality, arts and commercial real estate. A true sustainable recovery is going to require sacrifice and tough decisions. At the end of the day the suburban economy is directly tethered to the New York City economy and that recovery is going to take time, not to mention an effective rollout of the COVID vaccines.

For a sustainable recovery to occur it's time to move on, renew our focus on doing whatever it takes to end this pandemic (wear a mask!), and turn the page on the 2020 election. When talking about healing the wounds of 2020, I must now include the wounds inflicted by the events of Jan. 6, 2021 which will be etched in my brain for years to come. To witness rioters (those were not protestors) breaking into the Capitol by force and rampage, loot and threaten Capitol Police and elected officials, is a sight I never thought I would see, and hope to never see again.

Enough! Fires need oxygen to burn. It's past time to cut off the oxygen, stop the misinformation, end the baseless accusations of election fraud, and put this fire out.

HGAR's 2021 President, Crystal Hawkins Syska's vision for 2021 is "fulfilling the American Promise," and I cannot think of a worthier aspiration for the Realtor family to strive for. Too many people in this country continue to suffer from the effects of the pandemic; physically, emotionally and economically. The real estate community can and should play an important role in the recovery. However, to do that, WE HAVE TO MOVE ON!

HGAR's New Bronx Office Plays Santa On Christmas Day for Local Families

NEW YORK—HGAR's new Bronx office, headed by Eliezer Rodriguez, along with volunteers from the Castle Hill YMCA, distributed toys to more than 500 children on Christmas morning.



From left, front row: Sergeant Brandon Burke, US Army Recruiting Station Center at Westchester Square; Cristian Rodriguez, Saul Mata and Victoria Fontana, Asst. Controller, Leadership Connect. Second row: Louise Del Giudice, Century 21 Marciano; Diana Milone, Diana Alvarado Milone, Inc.; Janine Mosher, Bronx Chapter, HGAR; Sharlene Brown, executive director, Bronx Castle Hill YMCA; Hon. Fiordaliza Rodriguez, Judge, Bronx Family Court and Miguel Rodriguez. back row: Elio Acosta, Bronx Chapter Member; Hon. Eugene Oliver, retired Judge, Criminal Court; Handal "Frosty" Abdelrahman; Eliezer "Eli" Rodriguez, Director at HGAR and Liaison of Bronx Chapter and Javier Mata, CR Golden Glass.



Some Bronx children who received toys from "Operation Realtors' Kids."



HGAR's Bronx office became Santa's Workshop.

The New COVID-19 Relief Package: Highlights Of the Second Round

LEGAL CORNER

By John Dolgetta, Esq



On Dec. 27, 2020, President Trump signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 [see <https://bit.ly/3qb3WOP>] which passed overwhelmingly by both the House and Senate. The Appropriations Act is the largest bill (over 5,000 pages) ever passed by Congress. It includes \$900 billion in pandemic relief funds to assist businesses and provide important funding and resources for vaccination measures. This article will focus on the major aspects of the COVID-19 relief measures included for businesses.

Updates to the Second Round Of the PPP Loan Program

The Appropriations Act expanded and modified critical aspects of the Paycheck Protection Program. The Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Nonprofits, and Venues Act (the “Economic Aid Act”), which was included as part of the Appropriations Act, modifies and expands the PPP Loan Program. The Economic Aid Act allows businesses to apply for a PPP Loan if they had not done so in the first round. The Economic Aid Act also allows businesses that received a PPP Loan in the first round to apply for a second draw. Additionally, it allows those businesses that did not receive their full loan amount, or returned unused funds in the first round, to request additional funding under the PPP.

New Rules and Guidance Issued By the SBA Relating to PPP

On Jan. 6, 2021, the Small Business Administration issued rules concerning the Economic Aid Act and the second round of PPP. Some of the notable provisions and changes as highlighted by the SBA [see <https://bit.ly/2LgJNP>] are as follows:

- PPP borrowers can set their PPP loan’s covered period to be any length between eight and 24 weeks to best meet their business needs;
- PPP loans will cover additional expenses, including operations expenditures, property damage costs, supplier costs and worker protection expenditures;
- The program’s eligibility is expanded to include 501(c)(6)s, housing cooperatives, destination marketing organizations, among other types of organizations;
- The PPP provides greater flexibility for seasonal employees;

The SBA points out that the under the new Economic Aid Act, the borrower of the second draw must meet the following requirements:

- Previously received a First Draw PPP Loan and will or has used the full amount only for authorized uses;
- Has no more than 300 employees; and
- Can demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020.

Under the Economic Aid Act, \$284.45 billion is allocated for second round PPP Loans, which loans are targeted toward borrowers in low- and moderate- income neighborhoods, smaller businesses, and those businesses most impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic [see <https://bit.ly/3i4pb1U>]. It also targets funding for smaller community lenders that are more likely to provide loans in these areas and to these borrowers.

PPP Focus on Smaller, Heavily Impacted And Minority-Owned Businesses

The Economic Aid Act focuses on providing economic assistance to “...minority, underserved, veteran, and women-owned business concerns” [see <https://bit.ly/3i4pb1U>]. The SBA is undertaking a variety of steps, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Accept PPP loan applications only from community financial institutions for at least the first two days when the PPP loan portal re-opens;
- Match borrower inquiries to small lenders who can aid traditionally underserved communities;
- Continue setting aside dedicated hours to process and assist [the] smallest PPP lenders with their PPP loans;

Continue to strongly encourage ...minority-, women-, veteran-, and military-owned lenders to apply to become PPP lenders. SBA will give full and prompt consideration to these applications to become PPP lenders consistent with program guidelines, including in cases where the lender does not meet all of the requirements listed on the updated SBA Form 3507 and

- Promote awareness of these policies and procedures via traditional media methods, SBA social media accounts and guidance to lenders before the formal opening of SBA’s loan systems.

The second PPP Loan Program commenced on Jan. 11, 2021 for the above categories and targeted borrowers, and commences on January 13th for all other eligible borrowers. The SBA points out in its guidance that “...minority, underserved, veteran, and women-owned businesses that encounter difficulties in obtaining a PPP Loan should contact their local SBA district office for assistance. A link on how to find an office near you can be found via www.sba.gov/local-assistance.” The second PPP Loan Program will end on March 31, 2021. Those borrowers applying for second draw PPP Loans may not borrow more than \$2 million.

Expanded Eligibility Under The New PPP Loan Program

The Economic Aid Act expanded eligibility requirements to certain not-for-profit entities, such as 501(c)(6) entities, and entities that do not receive more than 15% of their revenue from lobbying efforts. The National Association of Realtors lobbied vigorously to have 501(c)(6) entities included because most Realtor associations are 501(c)(6) not-for-profit entities and were not able to apply for assistance under the original PPP Loan Program.

In addition, the new law provides increased loan amounts for restaurants, hotels, and other businesses designated under the NAICS Code 72 [see <https://bit.ly/3oJC6sY>]. These entities are permitted to apply for a greater loan amount, equal to 3.5 times the amount of eligible payroll expense rather than 2.5 times.

Additional Eligible Expenses and Forgiveness Requirements Under PPP

The Economic Aid Act also expanded the list of eligible expenses which may be paid using PPP Loan proceeds. In addition to payroll costs, covered mortgage, rent, and utility payments provided for in the CARES Act, the following additional expenses are eligible: Payment for software, cloud computing, human resources expenses and accounting expenses.

- Costs and expenses, that are not covered by insurance, related to looting and property damage caused by public disturbances during 2020.
- Payments to a supplier pursuant to a contract, purchase order, or order for goods in effect prior to taking out the loan that are essential to operations.
- Personal protective equipment and costs related to compliance with state and local requirements in connection with the health and safety guidelines relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic during the period between March 1, 2020, and the end of the national emergency declaration.

Borrowers are still required to use at least 60% of the loan proceeds for payroll expenses, and up to 40% toward other eligible expenses. Borrowers may now include additional group insurance costs (e.g., vision, dental, disability or life insurance) as part of their covered “payroll costs.” The borrower is also permitted to choose the “covered period” within which to spend the loan proceeds, which can be any length between eight and 24 weeks after origination of the PPP Loan. Under the CARES Act, a borrower was required to pick a fixed period of either eight weeks or 24 weeks.

Second Draw PPP Loan Requirements

The SBA has issued a new form for borrowers applying for a second draw (SBA Form 2483-SD - Paycheck Protection Program Second Draw Borrower Application Form). The lender is also permitted to use its own form provided it is the equivalent of the SBA’s form. A borrower must contact the original lender. Many lenders are setting up portals to accept new PPP loan applications and second draw loan requests. If the payroll information has not changed since the first PPP loan, no additional payroll documentation is required. Borrowers that received a first draw do not need to submit a new application. The loan will be processed under the existing loan number.

In order for a borrower to qualify for a second PPP Loan, there must be a 25% reduction in revenue as compared to a “comparable 2019 quarter.” The SBA has not yet explained what exactly a “comparable 2019 quarter” is. However, since the language is broad, it seems that any three-month period (or quarter) would qualify for comparison purposes.

If the borrower applies for a second PPP loan greater than \$150,000, the borrower would be required to provide its lender with documentation such as tax returns, or quarterly financial statements or bank statements, if tax returns are not available. For loans under \$150,000, no substantiating documentation is required. The forgiveness application process is also simplified. Additionally, for PPP loans under \$150,000, the borrower only needs to submit a one-page certification form, which will soon be finalized and made available by the SBA. Similar to the first PPP, borrowers will not be required to guaranty the loan as it is fully guaranteed by the SBA.

Additional Key Aspects of the Appropriations Act Additional Unemployment Assistance Under CAUWA

The Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020 (“CAUWA”), also enacted under the Appropriations Act, modified the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance provisions enacted in the spring of 2020. Some of the notable changes include the following [see <https://bit.ly/39nBZN8>]:

- The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program has been extended through March 14, 2021 (from Dec. 31, 2020).
- The amount of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefit has now been reduced to \$300 from \$600.
- Applicants applying on or after January 31st must provide documentation to substantiate their prior work experience.
- Identity confirmation procedures must be put in place by states for any applicant applying for PUA benefits.
- Applicants who receive both W-2 wages and self-employment income may apply for an additional \$100 in weekly unemployment benefits, however, the states may opt to provide this added benefit.

The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation period has been increased by an additional 11 weeks for a total benefit limit of 50 weeks (increased from the 39 weeks previously approved).

The CAUWA requires states to implement a system for reporting those applicants who refuse to return to work or refuse to accept a reasonable offer without good cause.

Employee Retention Tax Credit

The Appropriations Act also extended and expands the Employee Retention Tax Credit provided for under the CARES Act. Commencing on Jan. 1, 2021 and continuing through June 30, 2021, the changes include the following:

- The ERTC is increased from 50% to 70% of qualified wages.
- Employers are required to show a year-over-year decline of gross of 20% rather than 50% and provides a safe harbor which permits employers to use prior quarter.
- The limit of wages that employees are allowed to receive a credit for is now \$10,000 per employee for each quarter rather than \$10,000 for the entire year.
- Eligibility is expanded to employers with 500 employees or less rather than employers with 100 employees or less.

The Hope of a New Beginning is on the Horizon

The Appropriations Act passed with broad bi-partisan support, however, in light of the recent surge in COVID-19 cases and deaths, it is likely that additional COVID-19 relief may be enacted in the coming months. With the development of vaccines comes renewed hope that we are close to turning the corner. Neverthe-

US Existing-Home Sales Fell 2.5% in November

WASHINGTON—Existing-home sales fell in November, snapping a five-month streak of month-over-month gains, according to a report released on Dec. 22 by the National Association of Realtors.

All major regions either took a step back or held steady in terms of their respective month-over-month status, but each of the four areas experienced significant year-over-year growth.

Total existing-home sales—completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops—decreased 2.5% from October to a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 6.69 million in November. However, sales in total rose year-over-year, up 25.8% from a year ago (5.32 million in November 2019).

"Home sales in November took a marginal step back, but sales for all of 2020 are already on pace to surpass last year's levels," said Lawrence Yun, NAR's chief economist. "Given the COVID-19 pandemic, it's amazing that the housing sector is outperforming expectations."

Yun noted that job recoveries have stalled in the past few months, and fast-rising coronavirus cases along with stricter lockdowns have weakened consumer confidence.

"Circumstances are far from being back to the pre-pandemic normal," he said. "However, the latest stimulus package and with the vaccine distribution underway, and a very strong demand for homeownership still prevalent, robust growth is forthcoming for 2021."

The median existing-home price for all housing types in November was \$310,800, up 14.6% from November 2019 (\$271,300), as prices increased in every region. November's national price increase marked 105 straight months of year-over-year gains.

Total housing inventory at the end of November totaled 1.28 million units, down 9.9% from October and down 22% from one year ago (1.64 million). Unsold inventory sits at an all-time low—a 2.3-month supply at the current sales pace—down from 2.5 months in October and down from the 3.7-month figure recorded in November 2019.

Properties typically remained on the market for 21 days in November, seasonally even with October and down from 38 days in November 2019. Seventy-three percent of homes sold in November 2020 were on the market for less than a month.

"The positive momentum that home sellers are seeing will carry on well into the new year," Yun predicted, citing low mortgage rates and remote-work flexibilities.

Yun's projections of a continued housing market rebound were the consensus among economic and housing experts during NAR's Real Estate Forecast Summit, held recently. Industry insiders in attendance agreed that mortgage rates will hover around 3% in the coming year, and said they expect an annual median home price increase of 8.0%.

"Housing affordability, which had greatly benefitted from falling mortgage rates, are now being challenged due to record-high home prices," Yun said. "That could place strain on some potential consumers, particularly first-time buyers."

First-time buyers were responsible for 32% of sales in November, equal to the percentage seen in both October 2020 and November 2019. NAR's 2020 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers—released last month—revealed that the annual share of first-time buyers was 31%.

Individual investors or second-home



buyers, who account for many cash sales, purchased 14% of homes in November, identical to the share recorded in October 2020 and a small decline from 16% in October 2019. All-cash sales accounted for 20% of transactions in November, up from 19% in October but unchanged from November 2019.

Distressed sales—foreclosures and short sales—represented less than 1% of sales in November, equal to October's percentage but down from 2% in November 2019.

"While we still face economic and health challenges ahead, I have zero doubt that the nation will continue to recover from this pandemic," said NAR President Charlie Oppler, a Realtor from Franklin Lakes, NJ and Broker/Owner of Prominent Properties Sotheby's International Realty. "Whether it's through volunteering or philanthropy, or helping a given buyer secure that dream home, Realtors have stepped up in a major way and we will continue with those efforts in 2021 and beyond."

According to Freddie Mac, the average commitment rate for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage decreased to 2.77% in November, down from 2.83% in October. The average commitment rate across all of 2019 was 3.94%.

Single-Family and Condo/Co-op Sales

Single-family home sales sat at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 5.98 million in November, down 2.4% from 6.13 million in October, and up 25.6% from one year ago. The median existing

single-family home price was \$315,500 in November, up 15.1% from November 2019.

Existing condominium and co-op sales were recorded at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 710,000 units in November, down 2.7% from October and up 26.8% from one year ago. The median existing condo price was \$271,400 in November, an increase of 9.5% from a year ago.

Regional Breakdown

Median home prices increased at double-digit rates in each of the four major regions from one year ago.

November 2020 saw existing-home sales in the Northeast drop 2.2%, recording an annual rate of 880,000, a 25.7% increase from a year ago. The median price in the Northeast was \$354,100, up 17.4% from November 2019.

Existing-home sales fell 2.5% in the Midwest to an annual rate of 1,590,000 in November, but up 24.2% from a year ago. The median price in the Midwest was \$239,100, a 14.6% increase from November 2019.

Existing-home sales in the South decreased 3.8% to an annual rate of 2.82 million in November, up 25.9% from the same time one year ago. The median price in the South was \$270,000, a 15.0% increase from a year ago.

Existing-home sales in the West were unchanged from last month, recording an annual rate of 1,400,000 in November, a 27.3% increase from a year ago. The median price in the West was \$467,600, up 13.8% from November 2019.

Legal Corner

Continued from page 5

less, the vaccines' limited supply is still going to require individuals to continue to be extremely careful. While there is a light at the end of the tunnel, there is still a way to go.

The Appropriations Act, and additional financial relief, will hopefully serve as a bridge to assist those most impacted in this nearly year-long and very difficult journey for the country and the world. Many have lost their jobs and businesses, and so many have lost their lives to this virus. Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to all of those affected. We must not lose hope, we must continue to have the strength to get through this, we must continue to assist those in need and we must strive to reestablish some sort of normalcy once again.

Legal Column author John Dolgetta, Esq. is the principal of the law firm of Dolgetta Law, PLLC. For information about Dolgetta Law, PLLC and John Dolgetta, Esq., please visit <http://www.dolgettalaw.com>. The foregoing article is for informational purposes only and does not confer an attorney-client relationship.



www.PremierIPGroup.net

Lianna C. Bianco
 954.531.2844
 Liannabianco@gmail.com

Ashlee O'Donnell
 914.343.4832
 Acodonn@gmail.com

Gov. Cuomo Signs Bill Extending Eviction Ban Until May 1

ALBANY—After the State Legislature met in special session on Monday, Dec. 28 and the Assembly and Senate approved the bill, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo signed the COVID-19 Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2020 later that day.

The bill (S.9114/A.11181) prevents residential evictions, foreclosure proceedings until May 1, 2021 and also prohibits credit discrimination and negative credit reporting related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It also extends the Senior Citizens' Homeowner Exemption and Disabled Homeowner Exemption from 2020 to 2021. The Act adds to New York State's efforts to protect tenants and homeowners from the economic hardship incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Jan. 8, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said he would be proposing an extension of the commercial tenant eviction moratorium and measures geared to strengthening protections for rental apartment tenants during the coronavirus pandemic.

The proposals, part of the governor's upcoming State of the State address, will advance legislation to codify an existing Executive Order to extend a statewide moratorium on commercial evictions until May 1, 2021 for tenants who have endured COVID-related hardship. Landlords can evict tenants who are creating safety or health hazards, the governor noted. On Dec. 11,



Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that he would sign the COVID-19 Emergency Eviction and Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2020 at a press briefing on Dec. 28.

Gov. Cuomo signed an Executive Order extending the state's moratorium on COVID-related commercial evictions and foreclosures through Jan. 31.

"When the COVID-19 pandemic began, we asked New Yorkers to protect each other by staying at home. As we fight our way through the marathon this pandemic has become, we need to make sure New Yorkers still have homes to provide that protection," Gov. Cuomo said. "This law adds to previous executive orders by protecting the needy and vulnerable who, through no fault of their own, face eviction during an incredibly difficult period for New York. The more support we provide for tenants, mortgagors and seniors, the easier it will be for them to get back on their feet when the pandemic ends. I want to thank the

legislature for passing this important protection for New Yorkers all across the state who need a hand. This is the kind of support that helps us stay New York Tough."

The legislation helps tenants facing eviction and mortgagors facing foreclosure proceedings due the pandemic in five areas:

Residential Evictions

The Act places a moratorium on residential evictions until May 1, 2021 for tenants who have endured COVID-related hardship. Tenants must submit a hardship declaration, or a document explaining the source of the hardship, to prevent evictions. Landlords can evict tenants that are creating safety or health hazards for other tenants, and those tenants who do not submit hardship declarations.

Residential Foreclosure Proceedings

The Act also places a moratorium on residential foreclosure proceedings until May 1, 2021. Homeowners and small landlords who own 10 or fewer residential dwellings can file hardship declarations with their mortgage lender, other foreclosing party or a court that would prevent a foreclosure.

Tax Lien Sales

The Act prevents local governments from engaging in a tax lien sale or a tax foreclosure until at least May 1, 2021. Payments due to the locality are still due.

Credit Discrimination and Negative Credit Reporting

Lending institutions are prohibited from discriminating against a property owner seeking credit because the property owner has been granted a stay of mortgage foreclosure proceedings, tax foreclosure proceedings or tax lien sales. They are also prohibited from discriminating because the owner is in arrears and has filed a hardship declaration with the lender.

Senior Citizens' Homeowner Exemption and Disabled Homeowner Exemption

Local governments are required to carry over SCHE and DHC exemptions from the 2020 assessment roll to the 2021 assessment roll at the same levels. They are also required to provide renewal applications for anyone who may be eligible for a larger exemption in 2021. Localities can also set procedures by which assessors can require renewal applications from people who the assessors believe may no longer be eligible for an exemption in 2021. Recipients of the exemption do not have to file renewal applications in person.

On Sept. 28, Governor Cuomo announced the State's Tenant Safe Harbor Act would be extended and expanded until January 1, 2021 to protect additional residential tenants from eviction if they are suffering financial hardship during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Executive Order extends the protections of the Tenant Safe Harbor Act to eviction warrants that existed prior to the start of the pandemic, and those who are facing other than nonpayment evictions but suffering the same hardship.

BRI Names First Female President in 75-Year History



BRI President Lisa DeRosa

ARMONK—The Building & Realty Institute announced recently it has named the first female President in the institute's 75-year history—Lisa DeRosa, president of DeRosa Builders, Inc. of White Plains.

DeRosa has been active in the BRI for years. DeRosa served as a vice chair of the BRI's Apartment Owners Advisory Council from 2016 to 2020 and as a member of that association's Board of Directors from 2006 to 2020. She has also been a member of the BRI's Negotiating Committee during its labor contract negotiations with Local 32-BJ Service Employees International Union.

She was first elected to the BRI's Board of Trustees in 2016, and has served as secretary since 2018. The BRI made the announcement at its annual Holiday Networking reception held on Dec. 9.

"My goal is to bring the BRI to the forefront on all real estate matters and give the organization a greater voice," DeRosa said. "Whenever an issue occurs in the building and realty industries, I want the BRI to be the ultimate source

in the Hudson Valley. We have so many useful resources and an abundance of knowledge. Many of our members have issues that need and deserve to be highlighted and addressed by the media and legislators. I want to amplify our members' voices and give the BRI a larger spotlight."

"We are thrilled to have such a strong leader with such deep ties to the BRI family at the helm as our organization gets ready for what Westchester will look like post-COVID," said Tim Foley, executive director and executive vice president of the BRI. "Lisa's story is the story of the BRI. She knows firsthand what it really looks like for a small business and family-run businesses to build and operate multifamily apartment

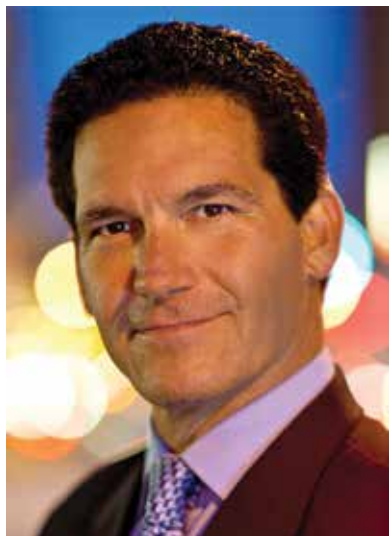
buildings in Westchester. She knows exactly what it means to keep them afloat in good times and bad, and how to maintain safe, secure, and affordable homes that working families in White Plains depend on. We can't wait to share her vision and her story with decision makers in White Plains, Westchester, Albany and beyond."

The election of DeRosa continues a longtime link between her family and the BRI. Her late father, John DeRosa, served as president of the BRI in the 1960s and was a longtime member of the organization's Board of Trustees. Her late mother, Margit DeRosa, was a president and longtime member of the BRI's Women's Council.

DeRosa officially began her term on Dec. 9, 2020, when she took over the position of BRI President from Vincent Mutarelli, who as Immediate Past President will be Chair of the Board of Trustees for the next year.

The Building & Realty Institute of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region is a building, realty and construction industry membership organization. The association, based in Armonk, has more than 1,800 members in 14 counties of New York State. Those members are involved in virtually every area of the building, realty and construction industry. The BRI will mark the 75th anniversary of its formation in 2021. The association was formed on Feb. 11, 1946.

Pasquale Leaves Elliman for Christie's Real Estate Development Post



Gabe Pasquale, vice president new development, Christie's International Real Estate Northern New Jersey, Westchester and Hudson Valley

RAMSEY, NJ—Veteran real estate executive Gabe Pasquale has left New York City-based Douglas Elliman to join Christie's International Real Estate Northern New Jersey, Westchester and Hudson Valley as vice president of new development.

The announcement by the firm, an exclusive partner of Christie's International Real Estate, noted that Pasquale will draw upon his decades of industry and market experience to offer planning and marketing services to developers.

Pasquale served for more than eight years as executive vice president and regional manager, Westchester County, for Douglas Elliman. Previously, he was a senior vice president with RXR Realty for four-and-a-half years. His real estate career has also included executive positions with Ginsburg Development Companies, WCI Communities and K. Hovnanian Homes.

"Mr. Pasquale is a dynamic, nationally award-winning, marketing and sales executive whose expertise encompasses

the envisioning and creative execution of some of the top resort, golf, high- and mid-rise developments and master-planned communities in the nation," said Ilija Pavlovic, president and CEO of Christie's International Real Estate Northern New Jersey, Westchester and Hudson Valley. "He has helped create aspirational experiences through his commitment to high design, lifestyle, and innovation, collaborating with world-renowned architects, designers, and style-makers along the way. We are very excited to welcome Gabe to our Christie's family and are confident that he will be a valuable asset to our leadership team."

"After spending most of my professional career with K. Hovnanian Companies, WCI Communities, Landsea Homes and Douglas Elliman, I am looking forward to the new opportunities that will arise with the merger of my 25 years of experience in high profile projects and Christie's unique offering

Continued on page 9



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Demolition Begins On Yonkers Public Housing Project

YONKERS—City of Yonkers officials and executives from the Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers and The Community Builders gathered on Jan. 11 for the demolition of a 1940's era public housing apartment building that is being replaced with 178 Warburton at The Ridgeway, a new \$56-million mixed-income residential complex of 81 apartment homes.

Attending the demolition event were Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano; MHACY President and CEO Wilson Kimball; MHACY Board Chairman James Landy and Lauren Hauck, Development Project Manager of The Community Builders.

"Today is yet another important step forward in the ongoing transformation of these outdated buildings into beautiful new multifamily residences. We look forward to working with The Community Builders, The City of Yonkers and Westchester County on this transformative residential development," said Wilson Kimball.

"The redevelopment of Cottage Gardens into The Ridgeway is yet another example of how Yonkers is revitalizing our neighborhoods and improving the lives of our residents. We commend the leadership of MHACY and The Community Builders on this very significant development that is creating quality affordable housing," said Mayor Spano.

"178 Warburton, the next phase of The Ridgeway, will soon be under construction where this building once stood. 178 Warburton will offer high-quality housing and amenities for Yonkers residents. The Community Builders Inc. (TCB) is excited to be here with our partner Municipal Housing Authority for the City of Yonkers to witness this exciting milestone which would not have been possible without the support of the city, county, state and many others," said Lauren Hauck.

Community Builders, which has offices in Boston, Chicago, Columbus, OH, New York and Washington, D.C., owns or manages approximately 13,000 apartment homes in more than 14 states.

The new eight-story building will feature a unit mix of six studio units, 35 one-bedrooms, and 40 two-bedrooms, with average unit sizes of 417, 652 and 914 gross square feet, respectively. The units will include dishwashers, microwaves and air conditioning. The building will include a common laundry room, on-site management, and a rooftop resident center comprised of a resident meeting/lounge space, an outdoor terrace, and a fitness room. Parking is free of charge. The units are affordable to families with a mix of incomes, ranging from 30% to 90% of Area Median Income (AMI), according to the MHACY.

The mixed-use building will also include a new Early Head Start day care center serving infants and toddlers from families with lower incomes. The space will include eight classrooms, a family resources room, a warming kitchen, washer and dryer, staff offices, storage and refuse areas, plus an additional 1,271-square-foot rooftop play area.

The project also includes a 33,000-square-foot central open space to be constructed to the east of the building. The recreation area will consist of passive and active spaces, including play equipment for children, adult fitness equipment, a fully accessible meandering path from east to west, and a picnic area. The open space will be constructed in partnership with the City of Yonkers, utilizing funding from Westchester County.

178 Warburton at The Ridgeway is the fifth phase of the six-phased master plan to redevelop Cottage Place Gardens, a 256-unit distressed public housing complex built in 1945, into the mixed affordable and market rate development, The Ridgeway. It replaces three outdated public housing buildings (Cottage Place Gardens Building #4, 8, and 12) and a former gasoline service station with a new, energy efficient residential building.



From left, MHACY President and CEO Wilson Kimball and Lauren Hauck, Development Project Manager of The Community Builders.

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U.S. Department of Labor Issues Final Rule To Clarify Independent Contractor Status



WASHINGTON—The U.S. Department of Labor today announced on Jan. 6 a final rule clarifying the standard for employee versus independent contractor status under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

"This rule brings long-needed clarity for American workers and employers," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia. "Sharpening the test to determine who is an independent contractor under the Fair Labor Standards Act makes it easier to identify employees covered by the act, while recognizing and respecting the entrepreneurial spirit of workers who choose to pursue the freedom associated with being an independent contractor."

"Streamlining and clarifying the test to identify independent contractors

will reduce worker misclassification, reduce litigation, increase efficiency and increase job satisfaction and flexibility," said Wage and Hour Division Administrator Cheryl Stanton. "The rule we announced today continues our work to simplify the compliance landscape for businesses and to improve conditions for workers. The real-life examples included in the rule provide even greater clarity for the workforce."

The Final Rule includes the following clarifications:

- Reaffirms an "economic reality" test to determine whether an individual is in business for him or herself (independent contractor) or is economically dependent on a potential employer for work (FLSA employee).

- Identifies and explains two "core

factors" that are most probative to the question of whether a worker is economically dependent on someone else's business or is in business for him or herself:

- The nature and degree of control over the work.
- The worker's opportunity for profit or loss based on initiative and/or investment.
- Identifies three other factors that may serve as additional guideposts in the analysis, particularly when the two core factors do not point to the same classification. The factors are:
 - The amount of skill required for the work.
 - The degree of permanence of the working relationship between the worker and the potential employer.
 - Whether the work is part of an integrated unit of production.

The actual practice of the worker and the potential employer is more relevant than what may be contractually or theoretically possible.

Provides six fact-specific examples applying the factors.

The rule will take effect 60 days after publication on the Federal Register, on

March 8, 2021.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce applauded the Department of Labor's final rule on the determination of independent contractors.

"The new regulation provides a balanced analysis for determining when a worker is an independent contractor or employee under the FLSA," said Glenn Spencer, senior vice president of employment policy at the U.S. Chamber. "By giving employers and employees greater clarity, and providing a modern interpretation of what it means to be an independent contractor, the regulation will increase the opportunities for single parents to control their schedules and raise their kids, ex-offenders to reenter the workforce, and help military spouses generate earnings as they move from place to place."

He added, "The statutes around independent contracting are decades old and don't reflect changes in technology, the workplace, or current workplace structures. The department's rulemaking is an important step, but Congress should go even further and update our laws for the 21st Century."

In Memoriam

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors regrets to inform its membership of the recent passing of former Association President and Realtor of the Year Antoinette "Toni" Emerson.

Emerson, who served as the 1995 President of the Westchester County Board of Realtors and earned the Board's Realtor of the Year award the following year, died on Dec. 26 at the Waterview Hills Rehab and Nursing Center in Purdys, NY at the age of 89. She was the daughter of Santina and Michael Aucello.

Emerson was employed at IBM for many years in public relations. Upon retiring from IBM, she joined Vincent and Whitemore and later Houhilian Lawrence as a real estate agent.

She had a great concern for the residents of Pleasantville and volunteered her time in various organizations including the Lions Club, Pleasantville Farmers Market and the Chamber of Commerce. She was also president of the Pleasantville Country Club. Emerson was always willing to do whatever was needed.

She is survived by her two sisters Beatrice Centonze of Stamford, CT and Connie Jakola (Al) of Katonah, NY, her niece Allison Centonze and nephew Michael Centonze (Dolly) whom she adored and cousins Grace Bear and Maria Aucello along with other family members and close friends Lydia and Michael Petrizzelli.

Due to COVID restrictions, the funeral services will be private and a memorial service will be scheduled at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please send donations to St. Jude Research Hospital, www.stjude.org.

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors regrets to inform its membership of the passing of Saul Singer, the former CEO of Robison and longtime HGAR affiliate at the age of 84.

Robison is one of the largest full-service home comfort and energy companies in the region. Singer died on Jan. 10 in Florida.

Singer led the growth, expansion and diversification of his family's home heating oil company, which started as Original Consumers Oil, serving the five boroughs of New York. Over time, it grew into a full-service energy company serving thousands of residents throughout Southern Westchester and Putnam counties.

He was born on May 30, 1936 to Anna and Harry Singer. His father founded the company Original Consumers Oil in 1928, and in the 1980s the company purchased Robison Oil, which was founded in 1921. Robison is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. The Port Chester-based company with 200 employees and serves more than 20,000 homes and businesses in the region.

Saul, his wife Fran, and his sons oversaw a more than three-decade expansion of the company, purchasing more than 15 regional oil HVAC companies while diversifying into air conditioning services, domestic plumbing, and green renewable energy solutions.

Singer was also a significant contributor to the betterment of Jewish life and culture in Westchester. He was the youngest President of Greenburgh Hebrew Center at age 30 and a founding member of the Solomon Schechter School in White Plains, a co-educational Jewish day school, now the Lefell School. He was a founding member of the Westchester Business and Professional's division of UJA, chaired the Westchester division of Israel bonds and the Jewish National Fund. He led a mission to the former Soviet Union to deliver religious items to dissidents and returned to create the Westchester Conference on Soviet Jewry, now the Westchester Jewish Council, that fought for the release of the Jewish people from behind the Iron curtain.

He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1957 with a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering. Singer enjoyed a great relationship with the Teamsters Union and sat as a trustee until his death. He was a proud supporter of the White Plains Hospital, and dozens of other local charities. He is survived by his wife, Fran, sons, Michael, David and Daniel; daughters in law, Jill and Holly, and grandchildren Cassidy, Delilah, Olivia, Ben, Wyatt, Harrison, Zara and Jared.

Due to COVID-19, in-person funeral services and Shiva were restricted to immediate family.

U.S. Sen Schumer Pushes Incoming Biden Administration for Expanded Route 17

By John Jordan

WASHINGTON—U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, who later this month will be designated as the U.S. Senate Majority Leader, revealed on Jan. 14 that he recently held a virtual meeting with incoming U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and urged him to prioritize federal infrastructure funding towards construction projects, including the estimated \$500-million expansion of Route 17 from Orange County to Sullivan County.

The Route 17 expansion project is seen by many business and economic development leaders in the Hudson Valley region as critical to the area's economy, particularly as it recovers from the coronavirus pandemic.

"Expanding the vital artery of Route 17 to three lanes between Harriman in Orange County to Monticello in Sullivan County is critical for the Hudson Valley's long-term economic development and recovery after the devastation of the COVID pandemic. The traffic on Route 17 is bad enough now, and new projects are only going to increase the bottlenecks and delays," said Sen. Schumer.

New York's senior Senator has been a longtime advocate for an expanded Route 17, going back more than 15 years.

Representatives of advocacy group 17-Forward-86 were emboldened by the reported conversation between Sen. Schumer and the USDOT Secretary nominee Buttigieg.

"We thank Senator Schumer for pushing the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary nominee, Pete Buttigieg, to prioritize federal infrastructure funding for the construction of a third lane on Route 17. As the hundreds of local business and community organizations that make up our coalition look towards the Hudson Valley's economic comeback, this project is a critical lynchpin to stabilize the economy, bring commerce in, and alleviate the decades long headaches that come with congestion along the Route 17 corridor," stated Maureen Halahan and Marc Baez 17-Forward 86 Co-Chairs.

Pasquale Leaves Elliman

Continued from page 7

and culture. Together with the Christie's brand and its unparalleled marketing platforms, we will be able to offer the ultimate level of service to our clients in the tri-state area," Pasquale said.

The CIRE brand is a global real estate network of more than 31,000 agents across 48 countries, representing annual sales volume of more than \$100 billion. CIRE-Westchester and Hudson Valley has offices in New City and Scars-

dale, with additional office locations coming soon, according to the brokerage firm. CIRE – Northern New Jersey has offices in Mahwah/Saddle River, Franklin Lakes/Wyckoff, Ridgewood, Ho-Ho-Kus, Hoboken, Ramsey/Allendale, Westwood, Upper Montclair, Summit, and Closter, NJ and is also slated for additional locations soon, the company noted.

Four high-level leaders from different county business sectors recently joined **The Business Council of Westchester's Board of Directors**. **Robert Amler, Donovan Beckford, Christie Houlihan** and **Stacey Tompkins** will take seats on the Board of Directors effective this month.

Dr. Amler is Vice President for Government Affairs at New York Medical College. He is also Dean of the School of Health Sciences and Practice and Institute of Public Health, and Professor of Public Health, Pediatrics, and Environmental Health Science. He has expanded the school in many directions and co-founded the newly expanded biotech incubator, Biolnc., funded in part by New York State, to attract and support researchers and start-ups in early-stage development of new drugs, vaccine strains, medical devices and medical apps. His latest project is the new Touro dental school and clinic on the Valhalla campus, which received New York State funding in the most recent cycle.



Dr. Robert Amler



Donnovan Beckford

Beckford is the CEO and Executive Director of the Westchester Community Opportunity Program (WestCOP), where he is responsible for the strategic vision, direction and day-to-day activities of the agency. He oversees a staff of more than 600 employees and manages nine major community-based programs operating within Westchester, Rockland and Putnam counties. He is the former Executive Director of the Westchester County Office of Workforce Investment and the Westchester-Putnam Workforce Investment Board.

Houlihan is Senior Director and Counsel at Houlihan-Parnes Realtors, LLC. Her work focuses on development, financing and legal representation for the company's portfolio of more than 8.5 million square feet of office, retail, industrial and mixed-use space and more than 25,000 multifamily units across the United States. The firm is engaged in acquisition, disposition, mortgage brokerage, leasing, property and construction management and consulting services for all commercial real estate asset classes, both for the company's portfolio and for third parties. Houlihan also worked on Capitol Hill to reauthorize and expand health care coverage for more than nine million children under the Children's Health Insurance Program.



Christie Houlihan

Tompkins, president of Tompkins Excavating in Putnam Valley, New York, started her career in the food service industry as a food service director for Aramark Services, managing the corporate dining facilities of several Wall Street clients. She is now the majority owner of Tompkins Excavating, which specializes in commercial site development. Since taking the helm in 2013, she oversees every aspect of the business and revenues that have more than quadrupled. Tompkins has been involved with many charitable endeavors including Feeding Westchester, Girls Inc, Support Connection of Westchester, Habitat for Humanity, Community Cares of Mahopac and the Community Center of Northern Westchester.



Stacey Tompkins

Ellis Sotheby's International Realty, a luxury brokerage firm serving Rockland and Orange counties in New York's Hudson Valley, recently announced that **Georgine Addeo** has joined the firm as a licensed real estate salesperson.

Addeo has worked in the real estate business for more than 38 years, specializing in New York City and the Hudson Valley, including Rockland, Westchester, Orange and Dutchess counties. She also is licensed in New Jersey and Florida.

Addeo has earned the Seller Representative Specialist and Short Sale Representative Certification designations from the National Association of Realtors and received several awards recognizing her achievements.

Addeo supports several sporting and charity events throughout Rockland County including New City Little League.



Georgine Addeo

Hadee Morgan, a newly licensed real estate salesperson, has recently joined the **Houlihan & O'Malley Residential Sales Group** in Bronxville.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Morgan moved to New York City in 1997 shortly after graduating from Penn State University with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science. Subsequently she worked for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation delivering environmental impact statements.

Having grown up in a family real estate business, she became interested in New York City real estate and later obtained her license in 2006. She took a break from real estate to raise her family during which time she established a successful jewelry design company allowing her to foster her eye for natural design and layout, the brokerage firm noted.



Hadee Morgan

Jo Ann Novello Hill has recently joined the **Houlihan & O'Malley** residential sales team.

She boasts a 23-year career as the Assistant to the President of one of the largest distribution companies in New York City. Being intimately involved with vendors, fellow employees, customers, as well as state and city government offices throughout her career has sharpened her problem-solving techniques. Houlihan & O'Malley noted that Hill's new found love of real estate has become her passion.

She was born in Mount Vernon but resided in the Country Club section of the Bronx for many years where she raised her two children, Brian and Jenna Marie. Hill has recently moved back to Westchester and resides in the Town of Eastchester.



Jo Ann Novello Hill

ERA Insite Realty continues to grow its sales force with the addition of three licensees, according to Principal Broker Lou Budetti.

Joining the firm's Bronxville office as salespersons are **Michael Berry** and **Elayne Aguasviva**, while **James D'Amato** joins as a salesperson on the Michael D'Onofrio team based out of the White Plains office.

Berry has been licensed since 2019 in NYC. As a Bronxville resident, he is now transitioning his business to the suburbs, following the track of his clients. He has 20 years' experience managing enterprise level projects in the financial industry, providing a solid foundation and skills to his real estate practice.



Michael Berry

make him a good fit for the Michael D'Onofrio team, which specializes in residential and multi-unit sales and rentals.

Aguasviva has recently earned her real estate salesperson license after 10 years in personal services and sales for upscale New York City department stores. She also has her own cosmetics company and is a long-time make-up artist in New York City. A Yonkers resident, Aguasviva is bi-lingual, fluent in English and Spanish along with some French. She is a graduate of Baruch College with a degree in Corporate Communications.

D'Amato comes to real estate with 20 years of wholesale and retail sales success in a variety of industries, as well as several years spent working as a loan officer in New Jersey. His sales and marketing skills, financial acumen and customer service focus are what



Elayne Aguasviva

Rand Commercial reported recently that **Kyle Knauf** has joined its Westchester County team and will be based in the White Plains office.

Having completed a master's degree at Columbia University and post graduate certificate from Columbia's School of Professional Studies in business, Knauf's background has been in administrative and executive assistant work in private equity and real estate. Most recently he worked in Colorado as an investment sales assistant helping to complete the sale of office and industrial properties in the Pike's Peak region. He is licensed in Colorado and New York.

Paul Adler, Esq., chief strategy officer at Rand Commercial, said, "Kyle Knauf brings to Rand Commercial a tremendous knowledge with investment property transactions. His attention to detail will help our clients find the right property, using the greatest standards to guide them through the transactions."



Kyle Knauf

Christie's International Real Estate Westchester and Hudson Valley, an exclusive partner of Christie's International Real Estate, has welcomed **Janet Carozza** and **Sherri Preston** to the Christie's family of agents based in its New City Sales Gallery.

Carozza is a licensed real estate salesperson with a focus in residential real estate and specializes working with buyers and sellers throughout Rockland, Orange, and Westchester counties. She has been in the real estate industry since 2001 and is a member of OneKey Multiple Listing Service and the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors. Carozza holds a bachelor's degree in Social Work and is a current resident of Valley Cottage, where she lives with her husband and two sons.

Preston is a licensed real estate associate broker with 30 years of experience in the real estate industry. The Orangetown resident's business is based on more than 80% referrals from satisfied clients.



Janet Carozza



Sherri Preston



HGAR

JANUARY 2021 UPDATE

Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation Donates \$40,000 To 20 Hudson Valley Charities and Non-Profits in 2020

WHITE PLAINS—The Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation, the charitable arm of the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, announced recently it had donated a total of \$40,000 to 20 charities and non-profit organizations throughout the Hudson Valley and beyond in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

As it enters its eighth year of fundraising, the foundation is gearing up for another successful year of providing financial assistance to those organizations dedicated to helping the needy in the New York metro area and elsewhere.

“We are thrilled to be able to provide help to all of the wonderful non-profit organizations that continue to make a difference in the lives of individuals and families in our communities,” said Maryann Tercasio, president of the Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation. “We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our Realtor members, colleagues, and sponsors who have made all of these donations possible.”

Despite the COVID pandemic, the foundation managed to hold several virtual fundraising events including a cooking demonstration, various online fundraising events and a holiday concert.

In October, the foundation held a “socially distanced” pasta class at Pax Romana in White Plains. “While we were disappointed that we could not hold our popular Pub Nights and a major gala this year, we are delighted that we were still able to raise funding from our online events,” added Bonnie Koff, chair of the HG Realtor Fundraising Committee. “Thank you so much to all who participated in and donated to the Foundation this year.”

The Foundation’s 2020 donation recipients included:

Name	Community	Name	Community
Alzheimer’s Association	Purchase	Hillside Food Outreach	Elmsford
Children of Promise Stable	Nanuet	Lifting Up Westchester	White Plains
Christ Episcopal Church	Ramapo	Meals on Wheels of Rockland	Nanuet
Christopher’s Voice	New Rochelle	My Sister’s Place	White Plains
Community Capital NY	Elmsford	Rockland Recovery Homes	Stony Point
Drug Crisis in Our Backyard	Katonah	SHORE (Sheltering the	
Feeding Westchester	Elmsford	Homeless is Our Responsibility	White Plains
Food Bank of the		Support Connection, Inc.	Yorktown Heights
Hudson Valley	Cornwall-on-Hudson	The Children’s Village	Dobbs Ferry
Friends of Karen	North Salem	United Hospice of Rockland	New City
Habitat for Humanity of		Visions	Manhattan
Greater Newburgh	Newburgh		

The Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation was established in 2004 and relaunched in 2013. As concerned members of the communities it works in, the Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation participates in qualified community-based charities who serve the housing, hunger, health, happiness and humane needs of citizens everywhere.

The foundation is now seeking applications from charities and non-profits for 2021. For more information or to apply for funding from the Hudson Gateway Realtor Foundation, please visit www.hgrealtorfoundation.com.

The Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors is a not-for-profit trade association representing more than 13,000 real estate professionals doing business in Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange and Sullivan counties, as well as the Bronx and Manhattan. It is the second largest Realtor association in New York, and one of the largest in the country.

SPOTLIGHT ON

Still Going Strong at 92

By Mary T. Prenon

At 92, Irving Rohinsky, president and co-founder of The World Realty Group in Suffern, has no plans to retire any time soon. In fact, he started his real estate career at 65, the age a lot of people have set as their retirement point. “I just love what I do, and I’m having too much fun to retire,” admitted Rohinsky.

With his strength in commercial and industrial real estate, Rohinsky has taken on major projects including the development and ownership of the first privately-owned office and retail center in Downtown New Haven, CT, as well as a 500,000-square-foot industrial complex in Branford CT and a shopping center in St. Petersburg, FL, known as the Azalea shopping center. He has also built multiple single-family homes and rehabilitated several mixed-use and multi-family properties.

Always an entrepreneur, Rohinsky launched his own real estate business soon after earning his license. Because of his history of buying and selling prop-



Irving Rohinsky

erties, he was able to pass the real estate test without even reading the book! “I’ve been in business a really long time,” he noted, “and I’ve always run an honest business. I like people and if you treat them nice, they’ll treat you nice.”

Continued on page 15



PHOTO BY JOHN VECCHIOLLA

The HG Realtor Foundation held a “socially-distanced” Pasta Class at TVB by Pax Romana in White Plains in October, 2020. Chef Christian Petitta conducted the class.

2020 HGAR RPAC HONOR ROLL as recorded by NYSAR to December 2020

Thank you to the following Members who are leading the way in the 2020 RPAC campaign

Platinum R \$10,000

Dorothy Botsoe, Dorothy Jensen Realty Inc., White Plains
Anthony Domathoti, Exit Realty Premium, Bronx
Richard Haggerty, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
Nancy Kennedy, Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Croton-on-Hudson
Michael Schmelzer, Tyrax Realty Management, Inc., Bronx

Crystal R \$2500-\$4,999

JP Endres, BHG Rand Realty, New City
Irene Guanill, Meet the Sellers, Bronx
Crystal Hawkins Syska, Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains

Sterling R \$1,000-\$2,499

Debra Budetti, ERA Insite Realty Services, White Plains
Leah Caro, Park Sterling Realty, Bronxville
Carol Christiansen, Café Realty, Mount Kisco
Katheryn DeClerck, BHG Rand Realty, Goshen
Ronald Garafalo, John J Lease Realtors, Middletown
Ann Garti, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
Richard Herska, BHG Rand Realty, Nyack
Pamela Jones, Coldwell Banker Res Brokerage, White Plains
Barry Kramer, Westchester Choice Realty, Scarsdale
Clayton Livingston, Grand Lux Realty, Inc., Armonk
Mark Seiden, Mark Seiden Real Estate Team, Briarcliff Manor

President’s Club \$500-\$999

Carmen Bauman, Green Grass Real Estate Corp., Bronxville
Teresa Belmore, Keller Williams NY Realty, White Plains
Gary Connolly, Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc.
Lawrence Curasi, Curasi Realty, Inc., Montgomery
Gail Fattizzi, Westchester Real Estate Inc., Somers
Kerri Stretch, John J Lease Realtors Inc., Middletown
Maryann Tercasio, Better Homes and Garden Rand Realty, Central Valley

Capitol Club \$250-\$499

Kazuko Boylan, Boylan Real Estate Group, Manhattan
Regina Clark, Real Estate Circuit Inc., Middletown
Nancy Curasi, Curasi Realty, Inc., Montgomery
Tony D’Anzica, Dynamax Realty NYC Inc., Manhattan
Sarah Hughes, Corcoran Legends Realty, Briarcliff Manor
Eric Levenson, J. Philip Real Estate, LLC., Briarcliff Manor
Eydie Lopez, Keller Williams Hudson Valley, Middletown
Roseann Paggiotta, Houlihan Lawrence, Yonkers
Thomas Scott, Madison Allied LLC, Rye
Robert Shandley, BHG Rand Realty, White Plains

99 Dollar Club \$99-\$249

Mario Aleman, Brittany Alvarez, Julian Berkeley, Sharon Bodnar Briskman, Desmond Bonar, Layla Boyles, Janet Brand, Lynette Browne, Elisa Bruno Midili, Randall Calano, Patricia Cassese, Michael Criscuolo, Irene DaSilva, Laurie DiFrancesco, Linda Darer, Kevin Dwyer, Patricia Ephraim, Rita Geissler, Debbie Goldstein, Jeanette Gruber, Isiaka Guobadia, Patricia Holmes, Clayton Jeffrey, Bonnie Koff, John Kope, Jeffrey Kuduk, Anthony Lando, Rosa Lulgjuraj, Kathleen Mangan, Iris McLee, Kathy Petreski, Valerie Port, Walter Sadowski, Barbara Shaver, Peggy Shea, Jacqueline Simmons, Cary Sleeper, Judith Speight, Cathleen Stack, Nancy Taylor, Deborah Valentino, Philip Weiden, Maria Weiss, Joseph Williams

Recap of Contributions Year to Date**

TOTAL: \$193,240 81% towards goal

Total with pledges: \$129,148

With 2,868 contributors 70% towards participation goal.

Goal: \$238,050 from 4,103 contributors for a total of 36% of membership

BOARDROOM REPORT

Boards of Directors

Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, Inc. (HGAR)

September 22, 2020 via Zoom and at
HGAR offices in White Plains

HGAR Management, Financial & Membership Reports

CEO Richard Haggerty provided an update relating to the completion of the merger with the Bronx-Manhattan Association of Realtors ("BMAR"). He welcomed Eliezer Rodriguez, former CEO of BMAR, and Vincent Buccieri, former President of BMAR, and both thanked all of the individuals involved with the merger.

President Fattizzi then presented the President's Report, and proposed to the Directors to have HGAR Leadership consultant David Severance and Nicole Furlonge, PhD, a Columbia Professor and Diversity and Inclusion consultant, who has been engaged to assist the Diversity Task Force with the creation of a Diversity Committee, to be present at the October Directors meeting to facilitate a discussion regarding fiduciary responsibilities, as well as facilitating a discussion in connection with issues relating to diversity, which the Directors agreed to.

Joel Gilbert, CPA, of the accounting firm of Lesser, Leff & Company, LLP, accountants for HGAR, provided a detailed review of the 3rd and 4th Quarter HGAR Financial Statements for 2019, as well as the 1st Quarter HGAR Financial Statements for 2020. After review and discussion, the Board approved receipt of the Financial Statements as presented.

Immediate Past President and Chair of the Nominating Committee Ron Garafalo then informed the Board of Directors that former Director Maryann Tercasio was chosen by the Nominating Committee to fill a current vacancy on the Board of Directors, and the Directors confirmed the selection.

Garafalo then presented the Report of the Nominating Committee to be presented at the HGAR Annual Membership Meeting and to be voted on by the Members. Mr. Garafalo also pointed out that the Report of the Nominating Committee included the slate of Officers to be voted on by the Board of Directors at the Board of Directors Meeting following the Annual Meeting.

President Fattizzi requested the Board of Directors consider a contribution of \$5,000 to the NYSAR Education Foundation and a separate contribution of \$5,000 to the NYSAR Housing Opportunities Foundation. Both of those contributions were included in the 2020 HGAR budget. After discussion, the Directors approved the respective contributions.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force

President-Elect and Chairperson of the Diversity Task Force Crystal Hawkins Syska provided an update relating to formation of a Diversity Committee. Hawkins Syska reported that the Task Force engaged Dr. Nicole Furlonge to assist the Task Force with the development of a Diversity Committee and plan for diversity and inclusion going forward. Chair Hawkins Syska reported that the Task Force is recommending that a new staff position be created to spear-head diversity initiatives. Hawkins Syska further reported that the Task Force would look to solicit bids to have a new survey conducted of the entire membership of HGAR. The survey would be specifically focused on diversity and inclusion issues. The Task Force also recommended the establishment of a Diversity Steering Committee, in addition to a Diversity Committee At-Large. Chair Hawkins Syska asked the Directors to carefully review the report prepared by Dr. Furlonge on behalf of the Task Force, copies of which were e-mailed to the Directors. Chair Hawkins Syska indicated that the Directors will be discussing same at subsequent meetings.

Committee Reports

President Fattizzi pointed out to the Directors that reports of the various Committees and Councils (i.e. Education Council, Fair Housing Committee, Legislative Committee, Professional Standards Committee, RPAC Committee, and Global Business Council) had been provided to them via e-mail and also included in their Directors' packets. President Fattizzi also indicated that reports of the Commercial & Investment Division, Women's Council, HG REALTOR Foundation Program Committee, Members Day Workgroup and the Recognition Committee, were also provided to the Directors.

Annual Meeting

President Fattizzi reminded the Directors that HGAR's Annual Member's Day and Annual Membership Meeting would be held virtually on October 26th and October 27th. On October 26th, a day of individual break-out sessions will be held throughout the day. On October 27th, the Keynote Speaker, Ricky Mendez, will be presenting from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., and the Annual Meeting and Awards Presentation will be held from Noon to 1:00 p.m. She noted that per the decision of the Recognition Committee, only three awards would be presented at this year's Annual Meeting. (Realtor of the Year, Affiliate of the Year and the President's Award).

Please welcome the new members in your area:

Realtor

Miguelangel Burdier
601 E 19th St., Apt. 4B
Brooklyn, NY 11226
646-662-5818

Janice A. Carrasco
Nexthome NOVACARR Realty
5273 Route 9W Ste. B
Newburgh, NY 12550
845-485-6682

Russell T. Dinstein
Red Sparrow Realty Group
150 East 93rd Street
New York, NY 10128
212-601-2686

** Candida F. Ellis
Coldwell Banker Village Green
11-13 Mill Hill Road
Woodstock, NY 12498
845-679-2255

Pincus M. Fulop
Do All Realty
505 Flushing Ave., #5B
Brooklyn, NY 11205
718-584-1000

Donna M. Hardisty
Sams Realty
412 Maint Street
Beacon, NY 12508
845-831-0344

Everton G. Lewis
Chequersbay Real Estate
10 Fiske Pl., Suite 402
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
646-339-7602

William A. Onofry
PO Box 711
Port Jervis, NY 12771
845-551-3731

Eric J. Oppenheimer
730-C West Broadway
Woodmere, NY 11598
516-569-1560

Emrah Sungu
Urban DNA Realty LLC
276 Fifth Ave., #704
New York, NY 10001
347-499-5150

Realtor

Elayne Aguasviva
ERA Insite Realty Services, Bronxville

Christian G. Anderson
Julia B Fee Sothebys International Realty,
Larchmont

Linda Anderson
Sams Realty

Eddie A. Argitakos
R New York

Pamela Aurich
Madison Allied LLC

Tracy Barry
BHHS Gross & Jansen

Mark J. Behan
Exp Realty, White Plains

Marisa Bellacicco
Exp Realty, White Plains

Alina Bertocchi Vizioli
Mancini Realty Inc.

Nicholas Bronico
Keller Williams Realty Partner, Bedford Village

** Teresa A. Buffa
Coldwell Banker Realty, New City

Sam Campolo
Keller Williams NY Realty

** Elivaldo R. Carneiro
Web Realty Company LLC

Thomas Casey
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Scarsdale

Frank Catalina
BHHS River Towns Real Estate, Peekskill

Michael Caviness
Hudson Valley Prestige Realty

Melinda Chappellear
Corcoran Legends Realty, Irvington

** George C. Chicolo
Terrie O'Connor Realtors

Jheri Ciaccio
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Westchester Properties

Marjorie Colimon-McCoy
De Penn Realty

James D'Amato
ERA Insite Realty Services, White Plains

Gina-Marie DeGiorgio
Corcoran Legends Realty, Briarcliff Manor

Harry Delany
Four Seasons Real Estate Center

Joseph R. DeVita
Julia B Fee Sotheby's International Realty, Rye

Daisy DeVore
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Larchmont

Danielle M. DiMichele
J. Philip Real Estate LLC, Pelham

Alexandria Dos Santos
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services
Westchester Properties

Christie Duffy
Exp Realty, White Plains

Katherine Dunham
Acela Property Management LLC

Christopher H. Farber
Exp Realty, White Plains

Christine Fekete
Curasi Realty, Inc., Montgomery

Gregory Ferine
Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices New England
Properties, Ridgefield, CT

Jane Ferraro Kane
HomeSmart Homes & Estates, Montgomery

Leonardo A. Figueroa
Exp Realty, White Plains

Porsha Flores
Howard Hanna Rand Realty, Pine Bush

Samantha Forrest
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Jefferson Valley

Valeria Fratta
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services River Towns Real
Estate, Croton-on-Hudson

Shaquana W. Green
Exp Realty, Yonkers

Daniela Grisanti
HomeSmart Homes & Estates, White Plains

Elliot Gross
Rodeo Realty Inc

Anthony P. Hardisty
Sams Realty

Christopher P. Hardisty
Sams Realty

Allison Hinek
Bernadette Gillespie LLC

Peter W. Hoffmann
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Cold Spring

David Holtzman
Dabar Management Co. Inc.

Jonathan Howard
Four Seasons Real Estate Center

Michael Iannuzzi
Kravitz, REALTORS, Ltd.

Olalekan Ikotun
Weichert Realtors, Larchmont

Anthony Impelizzeri
Angelo J. Milone

Marcus Jones
Giner Real Estate Inc.

James Kasabalis
Peninsula Real Estate Agency, Inc.

Kyle Knauf
Rand Commercial

Logan Kornfeld
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Irvington

Dylan Labadia
Curasi Realty, Inc., Montgomery

Alexander J. Langerhorst
Exp Realty, White Plains

Ruth N. Lara
Mark J Fonte

Kathy A. Leitman
Keller Williams NYC

Jacob Lenchner
Williams Raveis Real Estate, Armonk

Catia S. Leon
Keller Williams Realty Partner, Baldwin Place

Sarah Lichtenstein
Exp Realty, White Plains

Robert W. Lieberman
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City

Christopher Lofaro
HomeSmart Homes & Estates, Montgomery

Carissa J. Maerling
Cronin & Company Real Estate

** Steven G. Magnuson
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Scarsdale

Noah Marshall
Exp Realty, White Plains

** William E. Martin
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Armonk

Manek Mathur
Elegran LLC

Michelle McCall
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services
Westchester Properties

David J. Menendez
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Armonk

Cassandra Merolla
Compass Greater NY, LLC, Larchmont

** Liza L. Miele
Century 21 Geba Realty

Srdjan Milenkovic
Charles Rutenberg Realty, Inc., White Plains

Yasheika R. Mitchell-Mighty
Keller Williams Realty

Mauricio M. Moncayo
Keller Williams Prestige Properties

Ciaran M. Murphy
Douglas Elliman Real Estate, Katonah

Elizabeth Murphy
Green Team New York Realty

Yosef Neuman
Metrex Realty INC

Eric Pagan
Keller Williams NYC

Freddy A. Pichardo
Coldwell Banker Signature Properties, Valhalla

Margaret C. Pinsker
William Raveis-New York LLC, RYE

Charles Plaisimond
Home Sweet Homes Properties, Mamaroneck

Veronica Porter
William Raveis Baer & McIntosh, Warwick

** Tecia Poulas
BHHS Hudson Valley Properties, Stone Ridge

Edmond J. Pryor
CI Elite Home Services LLC

Katie L. Ribeiro
Howard Hanna Rand Realty, White Plains

Jennifer L. Rivera
Exit Realty Group, Elmsford

Melanie Rock
Ellis Sotheby's International Realty

Angela Sanchez
Corcoran Legends Realty, Briarcliff Manor

Elena Schloss
Weld Realty

Brenton R. Shelby
Zillow Inc.

Eduard Shtindler
eRealty Advisors, Inc.

Lindsay Silverman
Compass Greater NY, LLC, Dobbs Ferry

Tionna Smalls
Keller Williams Hudson Valley, New City

Alex Smith
Sams Realty

Helen Sobota-Diaz
R New York

Priscila Soto
Keller Williams Valley Realty

Michael H. Stang
Houlihan Lawrence Inc., Armonk

Toni L. Stila
Weichert Realtors, Nanuet

Malik Subhani
Z Wisdom Realty Inc.

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Aldo Tropeano
Sams Realty

** Joseph Turro
Exp Realty, White Plains

John-Paul Villafane-Molina
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- February 2-** CORE Day* with Dorothy Botsoe
- February 3-** Property Tax Grievance* with Carole McCann
- February 4-** How to Be A Real Live Agent: Mastering VIRTUAL Real Estate* with Katheryn DeClerck
- February 6-** Matrix: Adding and Editing* with LaVerne Brown-Williams (Saturday Course!)
 Matrix: Searches* with LaVerne Brown-Williams (Saturday Course!)
- February 10-** Contracts to Closings* with William O’Keefe
- February 12-** Anatomy of a Home II: Heating System, Hot Water Systems, Fuels, Air Conditioning* with Josef Fasolino
- February 16-** Matrix 1: Introduction to Matrix* with Ismail Kolya
- February 18-** Work w/ Municipalities- Navigating the Assessors Office/Building Dept. Like a Pro*, Katheryn DeClerck
- February 22-** Is That Pony A Pet? Understanding Assistance Animals (Fair Housing)* with Katheryn DeClerck
- February 23-** My Seller is Distressed! Is This a Short Sale? (2 hrs. Agency)* with Carol McCann
- February 23-** Matrix 2: The Next Step into Matrix* with Ismail Kolya
- February 24-** Co-ops and Condos* with Barry Kramer
- February 25-** Matrix 3: Matrix to the Max* with Ismail Kolya
- February 28-** Instanet Forms & AuthentiSign* with Katheryn DeClerck (Sunday Course!)
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CALENDAR

JANUARY 2021

- January 21**
 CID Commercial Real Estate Roundtable & Forecast for 2021
 Via Zoom, 10:00AM – 11:15AM
- January 22**
 Webinar: Getting the Deal Done
 Manhattan Market Update
 Via Zoom, 12:00PM – 1:00PM
- January 25**
 Women’s Council of REALTORS®
 HGAR & Legal Update
 Via Zoom – 10:00AM – 11:00AM

- January 25 - February 12**
 NYSAR Mid-Winter Meetings
 Held Virtually
- January 28**
 Breakfast with Benefits: Mindset Fitness
 Zoom Webinar, 10:30AM – 11:30AM

FEBRUARY 2021

- February 4**
 HGAR Installation of 2021 President,
 Executive Offers and Directors
 Via Zoom, 5:00PM – 6:30PM

- February 15**
 HGAR Closed – Presidents Day
- February 18**
 Commercial & Investment Division:
 Economic Development Roundtable
 Via Zoom, 11:00AM – 12:15PM
- HG REALTOR® Foundation Fundraiser –
 Virtual Beer Tasting
 Via Zoom, 5:30PM – 7:00PM
- February 19**
 HGAR Board of Directors
 Via Zoom, 10:00AM – 12:00PM



BARRISTER'S BRIEFING

By Brian S. Levine, Esq.



Keeping Your Ducks in a Row: Staying Compliant in the New Year

With the new year upon us, we must keep in mind all the changes that took place in 2020 (although I'm sure many of us wish to forget about last year). So, in keeping with helping all members stay in compliance with various rules, regulations, and requirements, I am going to dedicate this month's article to serve as a cheat-sheet for compliance-related matters.

Advertising

New advertising regulations (Section 175.25) went into effect on Nov. 2, 2020. For websites, all brokers and their agents that advertise an exclusive listing of another broker must now clearly and conspicuously display the name of the listing broker preceded by one of seven permitted phrases. The regulation applies to agents or brokerages that display an IDX feed on their websites. It also applies to paid advertisements through third parties. Further, if a paid advertisement is utilized, the word "advertisement" must immediately follow the name of the licensee. A copy of the amended advertising regulation can be found on the NYSAR website (<https://bit.ly/3ic14RO>).

In addition to the new regulations, an agent must be reminded to remain compliant with current advertising regulations and remember that all advertising (including signs, ads, business cards, marketing pieces, blast e-mails, social media, etc.) must be approved by your broker. Things to remember include:

General Advertising:

- Unless given express permission, you can only advertise your own exclusive listings;
- Do not use someone else's photos or description without permission;
- Include the brokerage name and either the full address or general office number;
- Include your license type.

Business Cards:

- Must include brokerage name, license type, brokerage address and general office phone number.

Teams:

- Team names shall either: (i) include the full licensed name of the real estate brokers, associate brokers or real estate salespersons who are part of said team; or (ii) if the names are not included, the team name must be immediately followed by "at/of [full name of the broker/brokerage]."
- Team names shall use the term "team." The use of any other terms besides "team" is prohibited.

License Renewal/Continuing Education/ NAR Code of Ethics

Some changes have taken place for real estate license renewal as they relate to Continuing Education, the most important of which is that brokers who were previously exempt from earning CE credit will no longer be exempt when they renew their licenses after July 1, 2021. For CE credits, timing is everything.

License Expires BEFORE July 1, 2021:

Must complete at least 22.5 hours of continuing education (CE) credit including:

- Three (3) hours of fair housing;
- One (1) hour of agency (two (2) hours if first license cycle);
- An approved Code of Ethics course every three (3) years.

License Expires AFTER July 1, 2021:

Must take 22.5 hours of CE credit including:

- Three (3) hours of fair housing;
- One (1) hour of agency (two hours in the first license cycle);
- Two-and-a-half (2.5) hours of ethical business practices (includes NAR Code of Ethics training);
- One (1) hour of recent legal matters (may include statutes, laws, regulations, rules, codes, DOS opinions and decisions and court decisions).

NAR Code of Ethics

As noted above, all member must take two-and-a-half (2.5) hours of Code of Ethics training to remain an active member of NAR and the association. This training recently changed from a two-year cycle to a three-year cycle. The last cycle was extended to Dec. 31, 2021.

Fair Housing

New Fair Housing regulations went into effect on June 20, 2020. As a result, all Realtors must now:

- Provide a Housing and Anti-Discrimination Disclosure (HADDF FORM <https://bit.ly/35DYc8r>) or go to the NYSAR website for more info. to every consumer at first substantive contact;
- Post a Housing and Anti-Discrimination Notice at all offices and at all Open Houses (Fair Housing Notice <https://bit.ly/3i8HpPS>) or go to the NYSAR website for more info) as well as add a link to all webpages.

COVID Forms

Currently, there are no state-mandated COVID forms that must be filled out by member, clients, customers; however, some brokerages, at the direction of their clients, have established certain business practices that will require the execution of various COVID forms in order for someone to see a property. This is permissible so long as it is done in a non-discriminatory way.

Other Forms You Should Already be Using;

Please be reminded that you are required to provide an Agency Disclosure Form at first substantive contact (Agency Disclosure <https://bit.ly/39pziug>).

You should also be providing a lead disclosure form (Lead Disclosure Form <https://bit.ly/3ol2dAp>) and pamphlet (Lead Paint Pamphlet—<https://bit.ly/2LxqFGj>) when necessary.

No Cold Calling

As of the date of authoring this article, there is still a state of emergency in New York. As a result, real estate agents are still prohibited from making cold calls to prospective clients with whom they do not have an established relationship. This means that you cannot call a FSBO to solicit the listing. However, you may call a FSBO if you have an identifiable purchaser interested in the property.

Legal Updates

NAR recently provided a release relating to the Department of Labor's (DOL) final independent contractor rule (Final Rule— <https://aboutblaw.com/UVY>) which helps in clarifying the standard for employee versus independent contractor status under the Fair Labor Standards Act. While the current effective date of the rule is March 8, 2021, NAR believed that the Biden team will freeze this regulation upon taking office, as they believe that the new administration is more in favor of classifying workers as employees rather than independent contractors. NAR will be closely watching this as it develops.

NAR stated: "For real estate professionals, the final rule does not change their classification as independent contractors under the Internal Revenue Code, nor does it preempt the many states laws classifying real estate professionals as independent contractors. Thus, states still need to ensure their laws adequately protect real estate professionals as independent contractors."

NAR previously submitted comments on the proposed rule last October, primarily advocating for minimal disruption to the real estate industry. NAR supports DOL's efforts to provide a clear and consistent standard for evaluating a worker's status, while preserving existing worker classification authority that allows real estate professionals to be independent contractors.

Brian S. Levine, Esq. is In-House Counsel/Director of Legal Services & Professional Standards Administrator for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

By Philip Weiden



Highlights of the Latest COVID Aid Package

A COVID rescue package has been signed into law by President Trump. The legislation included the following:

One item is \$4 billion for the MTA. The funding is critical to stave off cuts that the MTA claimed would be unavoidable without federal aid. If the aid was not forthcoming, MTA claimed that Metro North service west of the Hudson River would have been shut down. Service East of the Hudson would have seen major service cuts.

Another key provision included in the bill is billions of dollars for the pay check protection program. This has helped keep businesses afloat. The loans would be forgiven if it is they are used for rent, mortgages, payroll and other vital necessities for a business to survive. This provision was originally passed into law in the Cares Act, that was signed into law in the first half of 2020.

Billions in aid for rental assistance was also included in the bill. The funds will assist multiple New York government entities and by extension will provide aid needed to keep New Yorkers in their homes. Landlords need more help, and have not gotten nearly enough aid to cover expenses and mortgage payments. With eviction moratorium extensions at the federal and state level, landlords are struggling to survive.

Finally, aid to state and local governments was not included in the most recent rescue package. With U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) as the incoming Senate Majority Leader, this will likely be included in legislation in the new Congress. An increase in the SALT cap is also likely. This would provide New York homeowners with much needed federal tax relief.

Stay tuned for updates on possible future COVID relief legislation.

Legislative Affairs columnist Philip Weiden is the Government Affairs Director for the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.

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Still Going Strong at 92

Continued from page 11

His very first business, at the age of nine, was a newspaper stand in New Haven, CT, where he worked with a friend after school selling the former *New York Sun*. “We’d go out every day and sell those papers, and we’d even hit the theaters before the evening shows,” he recalled. “We use to say, ‘the Sun is out at night.’” Sometimes, if they were having a slow day selling newspapers, Rohinsky and his friend would use a little creative marketing. “We’d yell things like, ‘Hilter Drowns in a Rowboat,’ and people would come rushing to buy the papers!”

One of his biggest thrills was selling a newspaper to Gene Autry, the “Singing Cowboy,” when he was staying at the Taft Hotel in New Haven. “I remember running into the hotel, handing him a paper and getting 10 cents,” said Rohinsky.

Growing up in New Haven, Rohinsky reminisced about being “spoiled” by his four sisters. His father was a plumber and they lived a modest lifestyle. “People didn’t have a lot of money, but nobody went hungry,” he said. “People used to leave their doors unlocked too—even at night—and there was never any trouble.”

While he was never one to break the law, one time Rohinsky and his friends decided to climb a neighbor’s cherry tree and help themselves to some cherries. The next thing he saw was a police officer looking up at them. “He took us in the police car down to the station, and we were so small we couldn’t even reach the counter,” he laughed. “The police did let us go and didn’t tell our parents, so I guess we got off pretty easy.”

After graduating with honors from the University of New Haven, Rohinsky started his own plumbing business when he was just 24 years old. World Plumbing and Heating Co. served the residents of Connecticut for 14 years, and had a staff of 20 plumbers. “I always worked very hard to make a success of my life and I wanted to give my family what I didn’t have.”

Rohinsky first saw his wife, Joan, at a party following a basketball game, when he was playing on the team. Their eyes met but they were never formally introduced. Sometime later, he saw her again at a local hangout called Sloppy Joe’s. “After that, it was destiny, although I did tell her she shouldn’t marry me because I was too spoiled,” he quipped. The couple enjoyed a 40-year marriage with children and grandchildren, until she passed away in 1990.

Following his wife’s passing, he didn’t leave the house to go out for almost a year. His business partner then tried fixing him up with some widowed women, but nothing clicked. However, a call from his younger sister a year later would change his life. She met a woman who was widowed at a wedding and had given Rohinsky her phone number, but he never called. “One night my sister called and told me I had to call this woman now,” he said. “It was 11 p.m., so I called and said the most stupid thing—I asked her what she looked like! She had the greatest answer—she said ‘Let’s just say I’m well put together.’” Rohinsky and Eutice have now been married for 27 years.

Currently a resident of Monsey, Rohinsky eventually sold the plumbing business and has been in real estate for more than 25 years. He now partners with his grandson Chaim Cillo, who heads up the company’s Hillside, NJ office. “When my grandson first joined me, I asked him why he wanted to work with an old guy like me,” he joked. “From that time on, it’s never been a better combination.”

The two have built up the business and now have three offices—one in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The biggest change he’s experienced over the years is the technology. “It’s good and it’s bad—you have to be so careful about protecting your business,” said Rohinsky.

These days, Rohinsky often works at his home office, which is filled with pho-

tos of his children and grandchildren. “I have so many grandkids, I stopped counting,” he said. Some of them are now living in Israel, and he plans to make a trip there when COVID is finally over. Another grandson owns a bagel store in Detroit, the only one in the community, and it’s quite successful. “I plan to go there as well,” he added. “It’s a long trip for a bagel, but I’ll see my grandson too.”

During the pandemic, Rohinsky also made a vow not to evict any tenants who can’t pay their rent. “I’m 92 and have never evicted anyone,” he said. Also, once the virus is over, he plans to return to a gym, and has recently hired a nutritionist.

Throughout the years, Rohinsky has

always been active in his local community, serving on the boards of the New Haven Jewish Community Center, the New Haven Hebrew Day School, the Westville Synagogue in New Haven, the Congregation Bais Torah in Monsey, and many others.

The best advice he has for life is to marry someone who is kind, and to never use the word “problem.” There are no problems, he said, only issues to resolve. And for someone at any age beginning a real estate career, Rohinsky said there are three important things to do: be an early riser, have a competitive nature, and talk to God for inner strength. “You can do anything you want to if you put your time and effort into it,” he said.



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Will You Do the Work?

Continued from page 4

public ideas, emotions, safety and conduct; of being kind towards the public to respect them; and of being “for” the public in a basic sense.

Following this model, what is truth for the self and the public? Truth: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that by such, through hard work and self-sacrifice, all can attain their version of success. Any design that would hinder this or make it impossible should be removed.

My comments are not about being left or right, Democrat or Republican, Conservative or Liberal. Those are labels and they can and have been used to divide. The call of duty to self and public calls for something far higher. It is the commitment to uphold the “truth.” To support the foundations of trust in that “truth.” That is the focus. We may not be able to gain consensus on the how, but we should be able to agree to the work of the truth. The force of our will gives birth to the way. If any action or behavior challenges those things we must rally to reject it and recommit to our objective.

Hey, I don’t have all the answers. However, as the leader of this organization, I commit to finding them. It starts with thoughtful questions, open dialogue and a system of vetting ideas and protocols that protect our humanity and our principles. Why? So, I can keep liking “shiny happy people having fun” on Facebook and where on Shutterfly I see a New Year’s card template that reads “Holy Cow! 2021 Rocked!! 2022 is Going to Be Freaking Extraordinary!

Will you accept the challenge in helping me accomplish this? I hope you say, “Yes,” because this will help us fulfill the “American Promise.” Let’s stop dreaming. Rather let us make the ideal real, by which equality of opportunity is available to any American, allowing the highest aspirations and goals to be achieved. That is the work.



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Nuvance Health Systems to Shift 500 NY Jobs to Connecticut

DANBURY, CT—In the largest office lease deal in Connecticut this year, Nuvance Health Systems has signed a 220,000-square-foot lease at the former 1.2-million-square-foot Union Carbide property in Danbury. The 12-year lease deal at “The Summit at Danbury” will reportedly bring 500 jobs from New York State across the border to Connecticut.

In an announcement by property ownership, Nuvance Health Systems, which is headquartered in LaGrangeville, NY, will consolidate its executive headquarters, back offices, labs and clinical facilities to The Summit. A spokesman for Nuvance Health did not have any information on the transaction to provide at press time.

The lease with Nuvance, formerly Western Connecticut Medical, includes an option to expand up to 300,000 square feet. Nuvance operates seven hospitals in Connecticut and New York, including Danbury Hospital and Norwalk Hospital, and Putnam Hospital and Vassar Brothers Medical Center in New York. Its executive headquarters, back offices, labs and clinical facilities will be consolidated at The Summit.

Just two years ago, Summit Development President Felix T. Charney joined by Crestline and the Rizzo Companies, acquired the property in foreclosure and just 15% occupied, for \$17 million. Renamed The Summit at Danbury, Charney implemented a reimagining and rebranding program to right size the building to include a mix of office, residential and educational uses. Numerous amenities including a restaurant, a new road for improved access and other significant capital improvements have already been made to the 40-year-old building.



Nuvance Health Systems will be shifting some New York-based operations to The Summit at Danbury.

"The turnaround of this property that had been a beacon in Danbury for nearly 40 years has gone beyond what we could have imagined," Michael Basile project manager said. "We have invested \$20 million in improvements, and we have been blessed with robust commercial activity that has brought 12 new leases since our October 2018 acquisition, increasing occupancy from 20% to 41%. The Nuvance lease will bring office space occupancy to 80% and with their proposed further expansion we will be at 100%."

Charney said, "This is not only a success for us, but it allows Nuvance to have a unified, centralized headquarters, and obviously, it is a major economic boost for the City of Danbury and the State of Connecticut. We could not be happier with this outcome."

Crestline's James Delaune said: "We are delighted that Nuvance has chosen The Summit as its new home. Our team has worked hard to restore visibility of this iconic Danbury property. Having Nuvance as the new anchor tenant will

assure The Summit's prominence as Danbury's premier office and medical address."

"The announcement of the agreement between The Summit and Nuvance Health is some of the best economic news we have seen this year. As Connecticut enters the holiday season, this is great news that we should all be celebrating," said Governor Ned Lamont. "Summit Development has made a lasting commitment to Danbury and to the State of Connecticut through their investment in this property, and their new partnership with Nuvance Health, a healthcare institution which provides world-class care. This announcement is only the beginning, as I know it will serve as a catalyst for additional growth and development in Danbury."

Charney has made a specialty of turning around underperforming commercial properties in the Connecticut-New York area including repositioning the Norden Systems plant on I-95 in Norwalk to a mixed-use residential and office complex; converting the Handy & Harmon factory site in Fairfield to a retail center anchored by Whole Foods; and renovating the Yale Lock Building and The Maritime buildings on the waterfront in South Norwalk into stylish offices and apartments. He has also repositioned the former Reader's Digest property in Chappaqua into a mixed-use property.

Charney noted that there is much more still to come at The Summit at Danbury. "We have the zoning in place that in December will allow us to begin creating 200 apartments in the building," he said. "This is a creative approach could not have occurred without the cooperation of the city and its Planning and Zoning commissions and staff."

"The Summit at Danbury is positioned to be our city's biggest asset," said Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton, who is leaving office to become the Commissioner of the State Department of Revenue Resources. "Nuvance Health's decision to move its regional and New York-based offices to the Summit is great news for our entire city. In this highly challenging time, the success of The Summit is a bright spot and

an encouraging sign for the future. The Summit is progressing quickly not only in attracting office tenants, but adding residential apartments, a variety of retail and restaurant spaces and the first of its kind public school career academy to teach career skills. The Summit will have it all. Our city is excited to welcome Nuvance and all of the new workers, residents, students and visitors that the campus is attracting."

Anthony M. Rizzo Jr., president and CEO of The Rizzo Companies, said that the collaboration between private sector and the city is enabling the creation of a dynamic live-work-play environment under one roof that will be unique to the region and demonstrate the possibilities underutilized commercial spaces offer, while reestablishing the building as a major taxpayer for years to come.

"The pending agreement with the state and the city to build a new school funded 80% by the state, is a tremendously exciting opportunity," Rizzo noted. "The \$75-million Danbury Career Academy for middle and high school students has been approved by the state and could serve as a model for others." He said the new school would address enrollment growth and allow students to study career fields.

"Assuming the final bonding for the academy is approved in January," Charney said, "we will have filled all but 120,000 square feet of the 1.2 million we acquired in foreclosure. To accomplish this required a shared vision of all involved and a willingness to, quite literally, think outside the box. I am proud to have been a part of a true team effort."

Designed by the architectural firm of Kevin Roche John Dinkeloo, the unique building was constructed as Union Carbide's corporate headquarters in the early 1980s at a cost of \$450 million. In 2002, Dow Chemical acquired Union Carbide and sold the building in 2006. In 2009, a new owner purchased the 1.2 million-square-foot hilltop building at 39 Old Ridgebury Road just off Interstate 84 Exit 1 just east of the New York State line in 2009. Converting it to multi-tenant office space and renaming it The Matrix, it enjoyed some leasing success. However, following the death of the owner six years later in an auto accident, the complex began losing tenants and eventually slipped into foreclosure.

When completed, The Summit at Danbury will have 600,000 square feet of Class A office space; 75,000 square feet of conference and event space; and 30,000 square feet of core services and amenities including Market Place Kitchen & Bar, Platinum Fitness, conference space and pool; 400 residential apartments; and a public school.

A team of Gerry Leeds, Maureen O'Boyle, Jim Fagan, Brian Scruton, Adam Klemick and Kathleen Fazio at Cushman & Wakefield assisted with the transaction.



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Yonkers IDA Provided Incentives for \$210M In New Projects in 2020 Despite Pandemic

YONKERS—Building on the momentum of a very active 2019, the Yonkers Industrial Development Agency reported on Jan. 4 it had provided financial incentives in 2020 to residential and commercial projects representing a total private investment of approximately \$210 million.

The developments are projected to create 450 new residential units, 129,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space and nearly 1,500 construction, permanent and part-time jobs.



Point & Ravine Apartments, a 146-unit residential project, is being developed by Conifer Realty and will involve a total of \$72 million in private investment.

Over the past two years, the Yonkers IDA has provided financial incentives to development projects representing a total private investment of approximately \$1.1 billion. In 2019, the authority provided incentives for projects valued at approximately \$890 million in private investment.

The developments are projected to create approximately 2,700 new residential units, 234,400 square feet of commercial and industrial space and approximately



The \$60-million Lionsgate Studios is being developed at the iPark complex on the Yonkers waterfront.

3,450 in construction, permanent and part-time jobs. Ten percent of all new residential units are set aside for affordable housing.

“Despite the effects of a global pandemic, Yonkers pledged to move forward, and the results speak for themselves. We are not only ‘back to business’ but growing stronger and better than before,” said Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, who serves as Chairman of the IDA Board.

The Yonkers IDA kicked off 2020 with approval of incentives for the year’s most exciting new development project – the 109,000-square-foot motion picture studio to be built for Lionsgate Studios at the iPark complex on the Yonkers waterfront. The \$60-million complex will include 70,000 square feet of studio space and 36,600 square feet of ancillary spaces. The entertainment complex, which is expected to create up to 420 full-time jobs and 400 construction jobs, will put Yonkers on the map as the New York area’s premier filming destination, city officials said.

Governor Signs Three Indian Point-Related Bills into Law

ALBANY—New York State Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef announced on Jan. 1 that three bills the two legislators sponsored relating to ensuring workforce protections and financial assistance to local municipalities and taxpayers while the Indian Point Energy Center undergoes its decommissioning process, had been signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The new laws take effect immediately. Indian Point’s third and last operating reactor is scheduled to be shut down in April 2021. New Jersey-based Holtec International was approved by the U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to decommission the facility.

“With the closing of Indian Point less than four months away, it was imperative that statutory protections were put in place for the existing workforce and their families, along with guaranteed revenue for local municipalities and schools,” said Sen. Harckham. “Now, the changes ahead will be tempered and more readily dealt with. I am thankful that Governor Cuomo signed this legislation, and appreciate all the hard work so many people, including Sandy Galef, my legislative partner in this regard, put into making sure our residents received the help and consideration they deserve.”

“What a perfect beginning to the New Year with the signing of these three bills to protect the taxpayers of the village, town and school district, as well as the employees of the Indian Point nuclear facility,” said Galef. “Working together with the governor’s office, local officials and union representatives, our goal to put these bills into New York State law was achieved last night. It was my pleasure to work with Senator Harckham to get this important legislation passed, and we will continue to partner on other issues arising from the closure and decommissioning of the nuclear plants in Buchanan.”

The new laws include S.7846, which addresses the possible negative impact to the workforce during the decommissioning by keeping workers at Indian Point at the prevailing wages commensurate with the wages being paid for the same work in this area. This stays in effect after the plant’s present corporate owner, Entergy, officially hands the property over to Holtec to enact the decommissioning and is in control of operations. The new law also recognizes the need for professional maintenance of the Indian Point facility during its decommissioning, and requires that new hires are selected from a list of qualified employees at the plant.

“I applaud the concerted efforts of Senator Pete Harckham and Assemblywoman Sandy Galef in ensuring worker protections and the safety of our community during the decommissioning of Indian Point Nuclear Power Plants Units 1, 2 and 3,”



Indian Point Energy Center, Buchanan, NY.

Other projects receiving Yonkers IDA incentives in 2020 included:

Point & Ravine Apartments

Developer: Conifer Realty LLC
Location: Point Street & Ravine Avenue
Total Private Investment: \$72 million
Intergenerational senior and family housing
Number of apartments: 120 affordable units and 26 affordable townhome units
Jobs: 250 construction jobs

Jackson Terrace Apartments

Developer: Hudson Valley Property Group
Location: 100 Herriot St.
Total Private Investment: \$37.6 million
Acquisition and rehabilitation of rental housing
Number of apartments: 181 affordable low-income units

56 Prospect St.

Developer: 56 Prospect Holdings LLC
Location: 56 Prospect St.
Total Private Investment: \$32.6 million
Rental housing
Number of apartments: 126 units
Jobs: 250 construction jobs and 6 permanent jobs

Westchester Metal Works

Developer: Waverly Properties Inc.
Location: 1110 Saw Mill River Road
Total Private Investment: \$8 million
Expansion and relocation to 20,000SF facility
Jobs: 100 construction jobs and 52 permanent jobs

In addition to these new projects, the city celebrated the groundbreaking and grand opening of two residential projects that received IDA incentives in prior years. A groundbreaking ceremony was held Oct. 20 for the start of construction of 9-11 Riverdale Ave., a \$9.4-million mixed-use development featuring 29 rental apartments and 2,150 square feet of ground-level commercial space. The project, which is being developed by Erin Construction of Long Island, is located on a vacant lot along a prime corridor of Getty Square.

On Oct. 29, city officials joined with executives of the Stagg Group to celebrate the grand opening of The Marquee, a \$30.5-million luxury apartment building featuring 160 units of which 10% are designated as affordable under the city’s affordable housing program. Located at 697 Bronx River Road, the project received IDA incentives in 2017.

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\$93.5M Mixed-Use Project in Bedford Park In the Bronx Secures Construction Financing

NEW YORK—The New York State Homes and Community Renewal, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Douglaston Development announced on Jan.

supermarket on the ground floor. Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2021 on the \$93.5-million project located at 2856 Webster Ave. on land owned by The New York Botanical Garden.

“The Webster Avenue development is the result of a unique opportunity to transform an underutilized lot owned by The New York Botanical Garden into 188 affordable apartments for seniors,” said HCR Commissioner RuthAnne Visnauskas. “This development will help meet a growing need for safe, modern homes for New Yorkers to age in place. Residents will have convenient access to a ground-floor grocery store, on-site social services, and everything The New York Botanical Garden has to offer. As we carry out Governor Cuomo’s ambitious housing plan, we are committed to building and preserving affordable homes and combating homelessness in every neighborhood of the Bronx, in New York City, and across the state.”

HPD Commissioner Louise Carroll said, “Safe and secure affordable housing for New York’s seniors remains an essential priority for this administration. This new development offering affordable housing for seniors, complete with a supermarket on site, will be an incredible asset to the Bedford Park community for years to come. I want to thank

New York State Homes and Community Renewal and Douglaston Development for their partnership on this project.”

HCR provided \$32.1 million in tax-exempt bond financing, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits that will generate \$33.6 million in equity and \$6.6 million subsidy. HPD provided a \$12.8 -million subsidy. Financing for the project also includes a \$6.8-million deferred developer fee and approximately \$1.6 million in interest accrued from subsidy programs. Wells Fargo is the tax credit syndicator and provided a letter of credit for the project.

In addition to housing for low-income

seniors, on-site social services will be provided through Fordham Bedford Community Services to children and families within the Northwest Bronx and the surrounding area communities. Fordham Bedford Community Services provides educational services outside of school, recreational opportunities, referral services to health, educational, recreational, employment and child-care counseling programs, workshops for counseling and training in housing rights and responsibilities, financial education and community involvement.

The development will continue Gov-

Continued on page 23



A rendering of 2856 Webster Ave. in the Bronx.

5 the closing of construction financing for a 188-unit affordable senior housing development in the Bedford Park area of the Bronx.

The development will include a new

Governor Signs Three Indian Point Bill

Continued from page 17

said Thomas Carey, president of the Westchester/Putnam Central Labor Body. “Together, Senator Harckham, Assemblywoman Galef and plus labor and community leaders have worked tirelessly to craft these bills that fully understand the concerns of our school districts, fire districts, small businesses and, most importantly, our residents. They were genuinely engaged in all aspects of this massive undertaking, and the dialogue went well into the late evenings on many occasions. A big thank you to both of our legislative officials once again.”

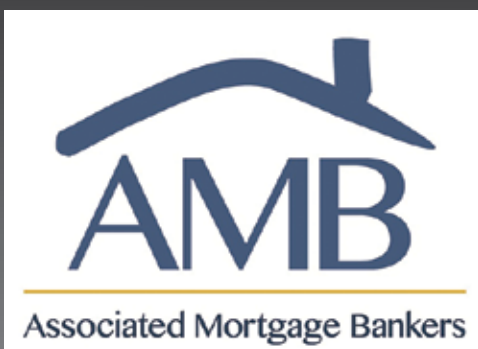
The financial implications to the local community from Indian Point’s closing are expected to be sizable. The municipal tax base and local school district funding have long been supported by the energy facility, and maintaining a good portion of that support is crucial,

especially in light of unforeseen municipal costs incurred during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

To steady tax revenues for the Town of Cortlandt, Village of Buchanan and Hendrick Hudson School District during the transition, S. 8075 will include now spent fuel and the fuel casks at the nuclear facility as part of its real property tax assessment. Otherwise, market value of the non-operating plant will adversely affect the assessment and create an unmanageable revenue gap for these tax-funded entities, Harckham and Galef said in a joint announcement.

The third new law, S.8204, concerns Indian Point’s PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement, which is set to expire in April 2021. The law allows “formerly generating” energy plants to make these payments as well.

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HUDSON VALLEY REAL ESTATE REPORT

Fourth Quarter Sales Surge Bolsters NY Suburban Real Estate Home Sales Market Despite Pandemic

WHITE PLAINS—The see-saw year, aka 2020, ended on an astonishingly high note for real estate practitioners in the Lower Hudson Valley, according to the 2020 Fourth Quarter Residential Real Estate Sales Report for Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan, and Bronx counties released on Jan. 5 by OneKey MLS.

After experiencing strong first quarter sales, agents looked forward to and anticipated more of the same for the second quarter. What occurred instead was a decimated market as a result of COVID-19, and the virtual shut down of real estate activity. Creativity and technology, as well as a desire by city dwellers to escape their close environs, resulted in historically high single-family residential sales in the third quarter which, as it turns out, was only a preview of what was to occur in the fourth quarter.

Every county in the region, with the exception of the Bronx, which falls in the city category, experienced year-over-year increases in residential home sales. All regions, the Bronx included, also saw increases in median sales prices. While year-over-year increases were significant, fourth quarter increases were nothing short of dramatic.

Westchester, which comprises the largest market in the region, had a year-over-year increase in single-family residential sales of 14% or 6,657 units as compared to 5,839 for 2019; one third of those sales occurring in the fourth quarter of 2020. There were 2,232 single-family sales in the fourth quarter as compared to 1,415 sales in the fourth quarter of 2019, a 57% increase. Year-over-year, the median price of a single-family home in Westchester increased more than 12% to \$735,000, compared to \$655,000 for 2019.

Increases were no less impressive in other counties. Putnam County, one of the smaller markets in the region, had an annual increase in single-family sales of 20%, going from 1,050 units in 2019 to 1,261 units in 2020 with a median price increase of 6% or \$380,000, as compared to \$358,000 in 2019. Single-family sales in Rockland County increased 14.7% for the year, with 36% of sales taking place in the fourth quarter. Unit sales for the year were 2,327, as compared to 2,028 in 2019. The median sales price of \$500,000 was an almost 10% increase over the 2019 median of \$455,000.

Year-over-year, single-family sales in Orange County increased 8.5% to 3,984 units from 3,673 units in 2019, the highest number of single-family sales ever recorded for one year in Orange. Again, 36% of those sales took place in the fourth quarter. The median sales price in Orange increased by 19% to \$330,000 from \$277,250 in 2019, finally surpassing a high of \$322,500 in 2007. Sullivan County, the northernmost in the region, had the highest percentage increase in sales for the

year. Single-family sales of 1,232 units surpassed 2019's number of 979 by 25.8%, with a median price increase of 36.8% to \$195,000 from \$142,500 in 2019.

Condominium unit sales were mixed, but prices increased in all markets both for the fourth quarter and year-over-year. Westchester County condo sales were down by 6.8% for the year, but showed surprising strength in the fourth quarter, increasing by 48% with an annual price increase of 5% to \$404,500 from \$385,000 in 2019.

Condo sales were strong in Putnam, up 37.3% to 173 units from 126 units in 2019. Rockland County condo sales increased year-over-year by 7%, while prices went from \$247,250 in 2019 to \$265,000 in 2020. Orange County condo sales dropped almost 11% for the year, but showed some strength in the fourth quarter increasing by 10% to 151 units over the same period in 2019. Condo sales were also weak in Bronx County, dropping 14.7% in 2020 (157 units compared to 184 units in 2019).

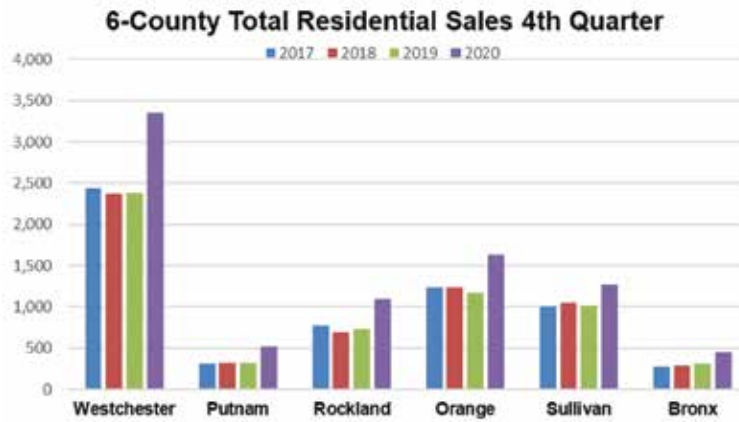
Westchester and Bronx counties continued to see their co-op markets slide with a drop of 16.7% in sales in Westchester (1,559 units sold in 2020 as compared to 1,871 units in 2019) and a drop of 27% in the Bronx (391 units as compared

to 537 units sold in 2019). Co-op prices rose in both counties. Multi-family (2-4 units) sales were down in all areas (with no change in Sullivan), but prices continued to increase in that category as well.

In general, the days a property stayed on the market (DOM) were down in all market areas and properties sold very close to, and in many instances above, list price—all indicative of a strong market.

The real estate market has been an anomaly in a difficult economy and future predictions for the market are difficult at best. Inventory is at an all-time low, which may negatively impact sales and put upward pressure on prices which, in turn, affect affordability. This is somewhat offset by the low interest rate environment. A higher than usual unemployment rate for the area remains a concern, but commercial activity in the lower Hudson Valley remains strong and should bode well for the residential sector. A high level of pending sales is an indication that in the near-term, sales will remain strong.

Sales data was provided by OneKey™ MLS, one of the largest Realtor subscriber-based MLS's in the country, dedicated to servicing more than 41,000 real estate professionals that serve Manhattan, Westchester, Putnam, Rockland, Orange, Sullivan, Nassau, Suffolk, Queens, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. OneKey™ MLS was formed in 2018, following the merger of the Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service and the Multiple Listing Service of Long Island.



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WESTCHESTER COUNTY					
WESTCHESTER - ANNUAL 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	6,165	5,883	5,839	6,657	14.0%
Condominiums	1,332	1,310	1,337	1,246	-6.8%
Cooperatives	2,037	1,994	1,871	1,559	-16.7%
2-4 Family	689	651	653	482	-26.2%
Total	10,223	9,838	9,700	9,944	2.5%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	642,000	650,000	655,000	735,000	12.2%
Condominiums	375,000	375,000	385,000	404,500	5.1%
Cooperatives	156,000	165,000	175,000	183,000	4.6%
2-4 Family	480,000	495,000	555,000	598,500	7.8%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	851,415	856,675	850,171	946,611	11.3%
Condominiums	443,221	442,708	458,771	482,524	5.2%
Cooperatives	187,907	198,840	204,529	219,940	7.5%
2-4 Family	470,528	509,867	560,323	603,166	7.6%
END OF YEAR INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	1,713	1,855	1,607	1,184	-26.3%
Condominiums	271	299	304	341	12.2%
Cooperatives	501	407	435	679	56.1%
2-4 Family	157	181	147	140	-4.8%
Total	2,642	2,742	2,493	2,344	-6.0%
WESTCHESTER - 4TH QUARTERS 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	1,442	1,362	1,415	2,232	57.7%
Condominiums	305	313	317	471	48.6%
Cooperatives	474	524	473	493	4.2%
2-4 Family	215	177	173	158	-8.7%
Total	2,436	2,376	2,378	3,354	41.0%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	600,000	601,750	615,000	731,500	18.9%
Condominiums	382,500	385,000	374,000	412,500	10.3%
Cooperatives	155,000	166,000	169,999	185,000	8.8%
2-4 Family	475,000	500,000	589,000	645,000	9.5%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	794,217	776,984	802,548	957,099	19.3%
Condominiums	461,088	462,027	451,005	495,344	9.8%
Cooperatives	184,710	195,024	194,422	217,218	11.7%
2-4 Family	473,162	526,575	579,011	652,261	12.7%

PUTNAM COUNTY					
PUTNAM - ANNUAL 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	1,019	1,041	1,050	1,261	20.1%
Condominiums	145	141	126	173	37.3%
Cooperatives	3	6	3	3	0.0%
2-4 Family	25	27	25	12	-52.0%
Total	1,192	1,215	1,204	1,449	20.3%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	337,500	350,000	358,500	380,000	6.0%
Condominiums	210,000	250,000	245,500	257,250	4.8%
Cooperatives	105,000	121,250	120,000	75,000	-37.5%
2-4 Family	295,000	335,000	325,000	375,000	15.4%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	368,415	390,927	383,663	436,040	13.7%
Condominiums	241,930	276,336	253,969	262,288	3.3%
Cooperatives	93,833	109,750	162,500	65,667	-59.6%
2-4 Family	294,623	364,799	334,536	376,333	12.5%
END OF YEAR INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	384	392	427	288	-32.6%
Condos & Co-ops	38	32	49	34	-30.6%
Cooperatives	2	1	0	0	0.0%
2-4 Family	20	16	11	6	-45.5%
Total	444	441	487	328	-32.6%
PUTNAM - 4TH QUARTERS 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	271	285	278	456	64.0%
Condominiums	36	34	38	59	55.3%
Cooperatives	0	2	0	0	0.0%
2-4 Family	6	3	6	6	0.0%
Total	313	324	322	521	61.8%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	344,000	365,000	340,000	395,000	16.2%
Condominiums	215,000	285,000	270,000	282,000	4.4%
Cooperatives	-	114,000	-	-	-
2-4 Family	225,000	375,000	320,375	432,500	35.0%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	389,434	401,169	382,198	460,911	20.6%
Condominiums	247,795	295,564	268,957	295,016	10.5%
Cooperatives	-	114,000	-	-	-
2-4 Family	260,833	353,667	325,958	421,317	29.3%

BRONX COUNTY					
BRONX - ANNUAL 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	529	558	548	491	-10.4%
Condominiums	180	182	184	157	-14.7%
Cooperatives	648	596	537	391	-27.2%
2-4 Family	651	699	668	532	-20.4%
Total	2,008	2,035	1,937	1,571	-18.9%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	435,000	470,000	499,998	530,000	6.0%
Condominiums	221,000	249,000	250,075	290,000	16.0%
Cooperatives	182,571	197,500	200,000	215,000	7.5%
2-4 Family	575,000	640,000	672,500	710,000	5.6%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	474,586	505,078	534,450	565,386	5.8%
Condominiums	290,539	338,042	314,330	333,960	6.2%
Cooperatives	223,698	233,423	234,159	246,919	5.4%
2-4 Family	578,897	641,589	677,664	723,874	6.8%
END OF YEAR INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses				182	
Condominiums				141	
Cooperatives				367	
2-4 Family				344	
Total				1,034	
BRONX - 4TH QUARTERS 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	148	158	146	164	12.3%
Condominiums	55	45	47	47	0.0%
Cooperatives	166	134	127	111	-12.6%
2-4 Family	179	175	180	163	-9.4%
Total	548	512	500	485	-3.0%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	451,500	493,850	500,000	550,000	10.0%
Condominiums	240,000	400,000	259,000	280,000	8.1%
Cooperatives	180,000	194,500	195,555	230,000	17.6%
2-4 Family	615,000	662,500	675,000	725,000	7.4%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	500,798	527,634	513,153	572,168	11.5%
Condominiums	321,599	450,702	364,823	320,462	-12.2%
Cooperatives	221,644	241,267	237,488	257,054	8.2%
2-4 Family	612,416	672,775	684,804	728,150	6.3%

SULLIVAN COUNTY					
SULLIVAN - ANNUAL 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	954	1002	979	1232	25.8%
Condominiums	7	8	10	4	-60.0%
Cooperatives	1	0	1	1	0.0%
2-4 Family	40	41	28	29	3.6%
Total	1,002	1,051	1,018	1,266	24.4%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	118,750	128,000	142,500	195,000	36.8%
Condominiums	35,000	32,750	47,250	58,500	23.8%
Cooperatives	15,000		54,000	235,000	335.2%
2-4 Family	61,350	71,500	79,250	125,000	57.7%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	152,629	165,068	178,127	235,641	32.3%
Condominiums	38,857	47,988	66,450	66,250	-0.3%
Cooperatives	15,000	0	54,000	235,000	335.2%
2-4 Family	75,854	91,351	123,714	123,946	0.2%
END OF YEAR INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	410	812	711	459	-35.4%
Condominiums	7	6	4	3	-25.0%
Cooperatives	2		1	1	0.0%
2-4 Family	22	39	36	31	-13.9%
Total	441	857	752	494	-34.3%
SULLIVAN - 4TH QUARTERS 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	270	276	300	437	45.7%
Condominiums	3	2	2	1	-50.0%
Cooperatives	0	0	1	0	-100.0%
2-4 Family	7	14	4	9	125.0%
Total	280	292	307	447	45.6%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	109,950	130,000	143,646	225,000	56.6%
Condominiums	50,500	31,250	43,000	102,000	137.2%
Cooperatives			54,000		
2-4 Family	84,900	77,500	101,250	140,000	38.3%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	152,047	165,649	180,809	282,528	56.3%
Condominiums	46,500	31,250	43,000	102,000	137.2%
Cooperatives			54,000		
2-4 Family	88,200	84,143	163,125	158,750	-2.7%

ORANGE COUNTY					
ORANGE - ANNUAL 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	3,836	3,833	3,673	3,984	8.5%
Condominiums	488	486	512	456	-10.9%
Cooperatives	16	14	20	9	-55.0%
2-4 Family	237	238	249	200	-19.7%
Total	4,577	4,571	4,454	4,649	4.4%
MEDIAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	243,000	258,600	271,500	315,000	16.0%
Condominiums	164,200	174,600	185,500	205,810	10.9%
Cooperatives	59,500	60,500	65,950	60,000	-9.0%
2-4 Family	142,000	165,000	210,000	239,000	13.8%
MEAN SALE PRICE					
Single Family Houses	256,591	280,206	288,845	338,095	17.1%
Condominiums	168,832	188,302	198,447	214,040	7.9%
Cooperatives	55,588	69,416	73,820	69,444	-5.9%
2-4 Family	157,499	183,633	219,701	254,734	15.9%
END OF YEAR INVENTORY					
Single Family Houses	1,446	1,441	1,406	850	-39.5%
Condominiums	107	102	85	69	-18.8%
Cooperatives	4	6	5	1	-80.0%
2-4 Family	129	138	92	94	2.2%
Total	1,686	1,687	1,588	1,014	-36.1%
<small>*Includes Cooperatives</small>					
ORANGE - 4TH QUARTERS 2017 - 2020					
Property Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	% Change 2019-2020
NUMBER OF SALES					
Single Family Houses	1,027	1,031			

Gotham Organization Secures \$235 Million For Mixed-Use Lower East Side Tower Project

NEW YORK—Gotham Organization, in partnership with Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group, has closed on a \$162.35-million loan from co-lenders,

The development will enhance CPC's community services and support the creation of a new mixed-use development in Manhattan's Lower East Side



A rendering of the 30-story 55 Suffolk St. development on the Lower East Side.

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A and U.S. Bank, N.A. In addition, Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group, in collaboration with Gotham, is also investing more than \$70 million to complete the capitalization of the 55 Suffolk St. development.

On the heels of the project's successful rezoning, the financing will advance the first phase of development, a 30-story residential building at 55 Suffolk St. When completed, the project will consist of 378 new residential rental residences, including 25% permanently affordable homes, neighborhood retail and a 40,000-square-foot headquarters for The Chinese American Planning Council.

neighborhood, creating a larger, more accessible facility for CPC, Gotham officials stated.

Subject to the city's infusion of the requisite subsidized mortgage financing, the second phase of development to build a 16-story senior affordable housing building is expected to start in the spring on the basis that HPD has awarded more than \$3 million per year in 9% federal low-income housing tax credits for 60 Norfolk St. In addition to much-needed senior housing, 60 Norfolk St. will also create a new congregation space and cultural heritage center for the Beth Hamedrash Hagadol Synagogue.

"The completion of this financing—during one of the most economically challenging years in recent memory—is a testament to the strength of this partnership and the tenacity of the entire team," said Bryan Kelly, president of development of the Gotham Organization. "We are grateful for the support and collaboration of all our many partners to move this important project forward, bringing not only new housing, but dedicated affordable senior housing, permanently affordable housing and new facilities for BHH and CPC."

In total, the development is expected to create 493 new rental units, including 209 permanently affordable units with 115 units dedicated to affordable senior housing—all envisioned in direct response to the community's growing need. Approximately 18,600 square feet of retail space for small-scale retailers is also included within the Suffolk building.

"We are proud to expand our commitment to bring affordable housing to the Lower East Side," says Margaret Anadu, managing director and Head of the Goldman Sachs Urban Investment Group. "This project shows that with a focus on community engagement, and collaboration across the public and private sectors, we can ensure this vibrant neighborhood remains a place of op-

portunity for years to come."

For more than 50 years CPC has been a community-based social services organization working to provide education, family support and economic empowerment to families and individuals across New York City. CPC's partnership with the Gotham Organization originated following an extensive RFP process in 2016. The organization is the nation's largest Asian American social services organization and is the trusted partner to more than 60,000 individuals and families.

"CPC is excited to build our permanent headquarters and community center in a neighborhood that we have served for over 50 years. We look forward to developing affordable housing for seniors and other community members, as well as expanding our services for the community," said Wayne Ho, president and CEO of CPC. "This project will give CPC the opportunity to continue being a community anchor as we work to promote the social and economic empowerment of Asian American, immigrant, and low-income communities of New York City. We thank Gotham Organization and many other stakeholders for their partnership on this project."

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The Latest on Google Alerts, Robocall Help, Headset Help, ANC and Product Solutions

TECH TALK

By John Vrooman
john@johnvrooman.com



Happy New Year! Before jumping back into things, as usual, I want to first mention some random, but exciting and consequential topics that I've been following, and would encourage you to consider following as well. The topics are: Quantum Computing; Protein Folding; Artificial Intelligence (a.k.a. "AI"); Augmented Reality (a.k.a. "AR"); Solid-State Batteries and CES 2021 (CES = Consumer Electronics Show).

The primary tech tool I use to help me follow topics of interest is Google Alerts. What I like about Google Alerts is that it's a "set it and forget it" type of service. You simply tell Google Alerts what you want it to find and how often you want it to deliver updates (alerts) to you. Once you've completed those simple tasks, you'll soon start receiving periodic Google Alerts e-mail messages that will include links to articles, blogs, etc. that relate to your Google Alert topic(s). Tip: When you set up an alert, pay attention to the "Show options" link that's found below the area where you enter your Google Alert search criteria. Also, after setting up some alerts, look for the "Settings" (gear/cog icon) that's positioned above your list of Google Alerts. When you click the "Settings" gear/cog you'll be able to select an option to receive all your alerts as a single, weekly, "digest" e-mail message that I prefer over receiving many Google Alert e-mails.

Go for it, I encourage you to create some Google Alerts on the above topics and of course, other topics that interest you.

FCC.gov Information About Robocalls and Text Messages

While browsing through the FCC's website I came across a couple of webpages that caught my attention and may interest you too. The first page is titled "Stop Unwanted Robocalls and Texts," and you can get to it by visiting this link...

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/stop-unwanted-robocalls-and-texts>

A second and more interesting (to me) FCC.gov webpage is titled "Call Blocking Tools and Resources." This page includes links to several call blocking and labeling

resources that should interest those who have a phone. Here's the link to the webpage to help get you started...

<https://www.fcc.gov/call-blocking>

Picking "The Best" Work-From-Home Headset Isn't Easy

While talking on the phone, I like using a headset. Why? Because when you use a headset, you typically are also able to free up your phone holding hand, and commonly also benefit from improved inbound and outbound audio quality. Unfortunately, picking the right headset (for you) isn't easy. A few initial headset-related decisions that you need to make are, what style headset do you want? Do you want 1) in-ear style (earbuds), 2) over/around the ear style, or 3) on-ear style? Do you want your headset to be wired, wireless (typically Bluetooth), or convertible between wired and wireless modes? The following link will lead you to a Google search results webpage that contains several articles that cumulatively identify many good options that are worthy of your consideration...

<https://www.google.com/search?q=best+work+from+home+headset+2020>

ANC (Automatic Noise Cancellation) Solution

When you're on the phone, sometimes you have to deal with unexpected/undesired noise. Snow blowers, lawnmowers, TVs, heaters, fans, kids playing, etc. are just some examples of noises that can suddenly interfere with a phone call. Automatic noise cancellation is a technology that can help reduce unwelcome noise from phone conversations. Some phones and headsets include ANC technology, and when that's the case, it can be helpful. Unfortunately, the cost of headsets that include high-quality ANC capabilities also tends to be more expensive. Even worse, many headsets don't have any ANC built into them. When that's the case, a solution that I want to bring to your attention is ANC software. Fortunately, some ANC software works well and can be acquired, installed, and used for free (or a fee depending on your use volume and/or product feature needs). An ANC software product that caught my attention that you might want to learn more about is a product called Krisp. When you visit the product's website, you can watch some examples of the product in action. I found the product demos to be quite compelling. If you're interested in learning more about Krisp, here's a courtesy link to get you started...<https://krisp.ai/>

While we're on the topic of ANC, I thought you may find the following howtogeek.com's article titled "Why Do Noise-Canceling Headphones Hurt My Ears?" to be worth reading and knowing about. Apparently, some people have a sensitivity to ANC technology.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/423960/why-do-noise-canceling-headphones-hurt-my-ears>

Apple Pencil Alternatives

If you're an iPad user, there's a good chance that you're familiar with the "Apple Pencil"...and their high price. While Apple Pencils are really neat, their price keeps many from getting one. If you're one of the many iPad users that haven't gotten an Apple Pencil because of the product's high price, there are some less expensive options available. I came across an article at the reviewgeek.com website called "The 4 Best Apple Pencil Alternatives in 2020." If this topic interests you, here's a link to the article...

<https://www.reviewgeek.com/36107/the-4-best-apple-pencil-alternatives-in-2020>

Heads up: There are two versions of the Apple Pencil, so you should confirm whether or not the Apple Pencil alternatives that are covered in the above article will be compatible with your iPad model.

Multi-Function Laser Printer Suggestions

Are you in the market for a multi-function color laser printer? If so, you'll likely find the following reviewgeek.com article titled "The Best Small Office Multi-Function Color Laser Printers" to be helpful...

<https://www.reviewgeek.com/64726/the-best-small-office-multi-function-color-laser-printers>

Are You Interested in Learning About Website SEO (Search Engine Optimization)?

If you've heard of SEO Optimization, but you're not that familiar with what it actually is, the following moz.com article titled "How to Focus Your SEO Strategy: A Quick Guide for Businesses New to Online Optimization" serves as a great introduction...

<https://moz.com/blog/how-to-focus-your-seo-strategy>

Are you in the Market for a Video Conference Backdrop?

Whether you're a privacy nut, a "professional image" freak, a greenscreen creative type, or just want (or need) an easy-to-use backdrop, check out anyvoo.com. Their backdrop products may not be the lowest cost options available, but they look like they will likely meet the needs for many. While your exploring anyvoo.com's backdrop product offering, you'll likely also want to review an article on their blog titled "These 19 Video Call Backdrops Could Actually Make You Proud to Work From Home." Here's a link to the article...

<https://anyvoo.com/backdrop-for-video-calls>

Reminders

This column (and many earlier ones) are made available for your viewing convenience at...www.realestateindepth.com/technology

If you have any comments, suggestions, tips, or questions, you can email John at john@johnvrooman.com.

John Vrooman keeps an eye out for cool new hardware, software, apps, gadgets; SaaS solutions; social media developments, trends as well as personal/SMB productivity and related solutions. He gathers information for his column from a diverse range of resources and he enjoys sharing his discoveries with others. He has been authoring this column since August 2000 and welcomes feedback from his readers.



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New York State Association of REALTORS®, Inc.

Highlighted Events

- Young Professionals Network Meeting
Jan. 25, 5 - 7 p.m.
- 2021 Installation of Officers
Feb. 8, 7 - 9 p.m.
- Legal Update
Feb. 9, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- General Session
Feb. 9, 1 - 2:30 p.m.
- Legislative Policy Forum
Feb. 10, 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Westchester Advanced Manufacturing Firm Expands Operations with New Lease Deal

ELMSFORD—Robert Martin Company announced recently that PTI, a leader in advanced manufacturing technologies, has signed a lease for 13,650 square feet of expansion space at 8 Skyline Drive at the Mid-Westchester Executive Park in Hawthorne.

PTI, which manufactures non-destructive package inspection technologies for the pharmaceutical, medical device and food industries, previously signed a lease for 14,255 square feet at 8 Skyline Drive in 2018. The space incorporated PTI's executive offices, sales department, research and development, manufacturing and shipping and receiving functions. With this new lease, PTI now occupies approximately 28,000 square feet at 8 Skyline Drive, nearly four times the size of its original offices in Tuckahoe.

"PTI's considerable expansion at our Mid-Westchester Executive Park

of existing small-to-midsize firms in Westchester in need of expanding their operations. This includes providing flexible spaces for light manufacturing, labs and/or offices designed especially for high-growth potential companies utilizing the latest in R&D workflow techniques.

Robert Martin Company President Greg Berger said, "Skyline Drive's repositioning as an innovation corridor for the life sciences and health technologies industry is bearing fruit. PTI's expansion is evidence of a longer-term trend that will benefit the Westchester economy for years to come."

RMC Bio1 Managing Director, Laurence Gottlieb, noted that the expansion of larger scientific research and development companies such as Regeneron Pharmaceuticals naturally creates start-up and expansion opportunities for companies in related fields that feed

Howard Greenberg, of Howard Properties, Ltd. of Valhalla, represented PTI in both the original and expansion lease transactions.

The PTI lease is the second transaction in several months at Skyline Drive which is emerging as a center for companies in the bioscience and medical device field. In October, Clarapath

leased 7,000 square feet at 12 Skyline Drive. The company, which is moving from New York City, is a developer of an integrated histology platform designed to standardize and digitally transform anatomic pathology. The company plans to use the new space for the light manufacturing of its medical tech equipment.



With its new lease deal, PTI now occupies approximately 28,000 square feet of space at Robert Martin Co's 8 Skyline Drive in Elmsford.

represents the kind of entrepreneurial, innovative technology companies we are targeting for growth through the RMC Bio1 initiative we launched in late 2019," said Tim Jones, CEO of Robert Martin Company.

RMC Bio1 focuses primarily on attracting life sciences and health technologies companies transitioning from start-up incubators and accelerator programs into larger "graduation" spaces, as well as working on the retention

off that growth. "We envisioned Skyline Drive evolving into 'Bio Boulevard,' as more STEM-related companies join the fold and eventually connect into the larger 'Innovation Corridor' forming around an epicenter in Westchester County, which includes formidable assets such as Regeneron, Acorda Therapeutics, New York Medical College, BioInc@NYMC, Westchester Medical Center and the planned North 60 life sciences campus."

\$93.5M Mixed-Use Project

Continued from page 18

error Cuomo's commitment to providing all New Yorkers with access to safe, affordable housing through the state's unprecedented \$20 billion, five-year Housing and Homelessness Plan. The plan makes housing accessible and combats homelessness by building or preserving more than 100,000 affordable homes and 6,000 with supportive services.

The project will also aid Mayor de Blasio in meeting his commitment to create or preserve 300,000 affordable homes in his Housing New York: A Five-Borough, Ten-Year Plan and updated Housing New York 2.0 plan.

The New York Botanical Garden selected Douglaston Development to lead the development process and executed a 99-year ground lease with Douglaston in August of 2020. This is the first phase of a two-phase development that will include a future affordable mixed-use development at the adjacent 410 Bedford Park Blvd.

Jeffrey E. Levine, founder and chairman of Douglaston Development said of the project, "We're proud to take part in an exemplary project involving both city and state entities banding together

to bring much-needed affordable senior housing to fruition within the Bronx community. We look forward to our continued partnership with The New York Botanical Garden as the project moves into its next phase of development and breaks ground in the coming months."

The project benefited from NYC DCP's FRESH (Food Retail Expansion to Support Health) Program, which provides zoning and tax benefits for the creation or renovation of supermarkets that agree to operate as certified FRESH food stores in applicable districts throughout New York City.

Aaron Bouska, vice president for government and community relations at NYBG said, "The New York Botanical Garden applauds New York State's and New York City's commitments to an affordable mixed-use, intergenerational project in our neighborhood, which NYBG has anchored for 130 years. With more than 40% of seniors in the Bronx being rent-burdened, the need for affordable senior housing cannot be overstated. After almost a decade of collaboration with community stakeholders, it is gratifying to know construction will commence in 2021."

NJ Brokerage Merges with Howard Hanna Rand Realty

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, NJ—Locally-based Plawker Real Estate, one of Bergen County's leading brokers, recently announced that it has joined forces with real estate brokerage firm Howard

knowledge."

Adam Plawker, managing director of Plawker Real Estate, added, "I'm looking forward to heading up the North Jersey expansion of Rand Commercial

— Plawker Group. I will continue to do what I love, dealing with people, while growing and managing a powerhouse commercial real estate office based in Englewood Cliffs."

The September partnership of Howard Hanna and Rand Realty has added to the strength of both family-owned real estate companies throughout New Jersey and New York. Howard Hanna finished 2019 with a closed sales volume of more than \$23 billion and more than

100,000 homes sold in total, according to a research report produced by REAL Trends in March 2020.

"We're so excited to have the Plawker Real Estate group join us as we work to consistently deliver an amazing real estate experience throughout the country," said Howard W. "Hoby" Hanna, IV, president of Howard Hanna Real Estate Services. "Under Matt Rand's leadership and direction in New Jersey and New York, this is the first of what we believe will be multiple mergers in the tri-state area in the coming months."

Howard Hanna Rand Realty has more than 1,000 residential real estate sales associates, as well as a commercial real estate company (Rand Commercial) and Hudson United Home Services, which provides residential mortgage lending, title services, and personal lines and commercial insurance. Its 28 offices serve Bergen County, Passaic, Hudson, Morris, and Essex counties in New Jersey, as well as Westchester, Rockland, Orange, Dutchess, Ulster and Bronx counties in New York.



Hanna Rand Realty.

The Plawker Real Estate office at 601 Palisade Ave. in Englewood Cliffs will now operate as Howard Hanna Rand Realty — Plawker Group. Additionally, the Plawker Commercial office will now operate as Rand Commercial — Plawker Group.

"I have so much respect for Terry, Adam, and Barri Plawker, and we are thrilled to welcome them to the Howard Hanna Rand family," said Matt Rand, CEO of Rand Realty. "Howard Hanna Rand Realty is currently well positioned as a Top 10 Bergen County broker, and we are looking forward to tremendous growth with the addition of the Plawker Group."

"We have been operating for over 40 years in Englewood Cliffs and are looking forward to this exciting next chapter for our company and our family," said Terry Plawker, founder of Plawker Real Estate. "Our clients will benefit from this new affiliation with the Rand and Hanna families. Their global marketing and technology tools are sure to enhance our unmatched service and local market

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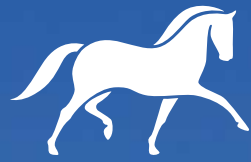
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